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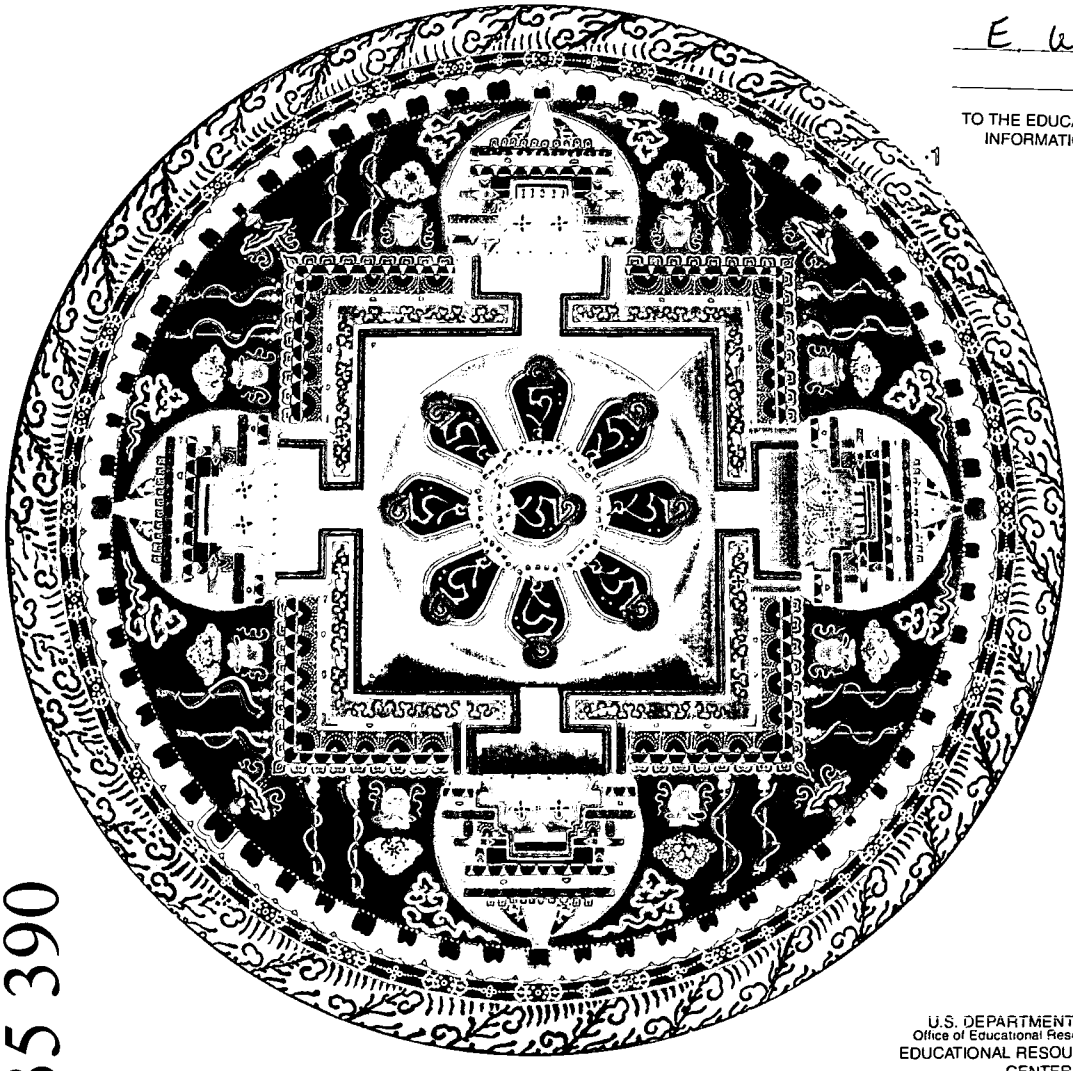
ABSTRACT

This magazine provides teachers with classroom learning materials to help children learn to be tolerant with others. Articles in the magazine are: "A Standard to Sustain" (Mary M. Harrison); "Let's Just Play" (Janet Schmidt); "Who's Helen Keller?" (Ruth Shagoury Hubbard); "Margins of Error" (Joe Parsons); "Out of the Shadows" (Elizabeth Hunt); "Mixitup" (Dana Williams); and "It Happened Here" (Tim Walker). Departments in the magazine are: Hear and Now; Idea Exchange; Grant Spotlight; Teaching Tools; Story Corner; and One World. (BT)

Teaching Tolerance

MAGAZINE



Number 24 • Fall 2003

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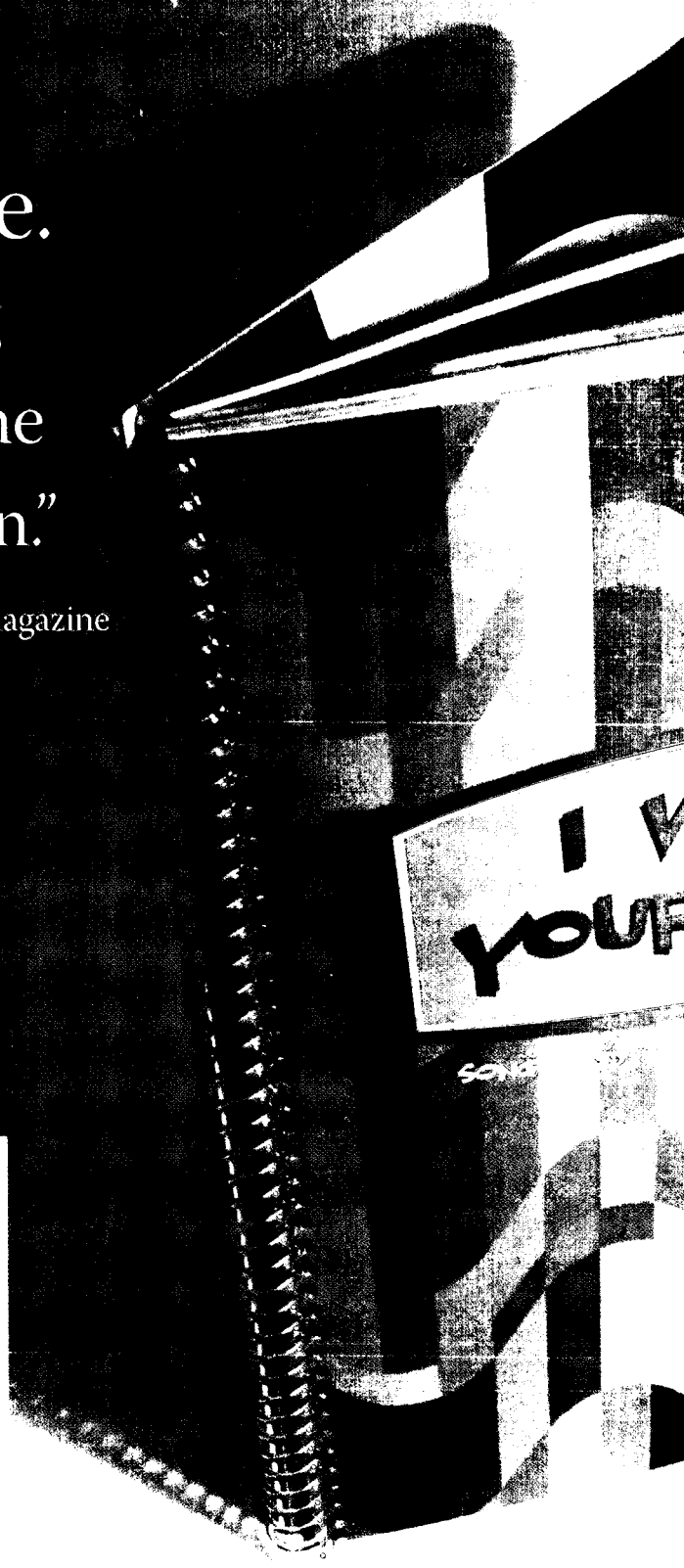
—Chicago Parent magazine



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—A. Deakers, California

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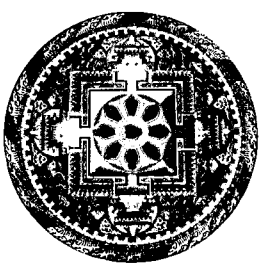

DAVID CAMPBELL/ALABAMA STATE

On The Cover

MANDALA

The Tibetan Lamas of Drepung Loseling Monastery

sand painting

Tibetan Buddhist monks take time to construct dul-tson-kyil-khor (literally, "mandala of colored powders"), using millions of grains of sand, as a way to reconsecrate the earth and its inhabitants.

Editor's Note

tol·er·ance *n.*: the capacity for or the practice of recognizing and respecting the beliefs or practices of others.
– THE AMERICAN HERITAGE DICTIONARY

"Student body diversity promotes learning outcomes and 'better prepares students for an increasingly diverse workforce and society ...'"
—Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, *Grutter v. Bollinger*

This past April, 24-hour news channels buzzed with debate over the Supreme Court's ruling in *Grutter v. Bollinger*. Some pundits championed the high court's conclusion that race-conscious admissions fulfill a valuable objective: campus diversity. Others balked at the Court's embrace of affirmative action in higher education.

Lost in all the talk was one obvious truth: the critical time for "diversity education" comes not after high school, but during and before it.

More than 30 percent of high school seniors don't go straight to college, if they go at all. For some students, the K-12 years are the *only* opportunity for diversity education.

K-12 educators spend 13 years preparing young people for participation in a diverse, democratic society. Multicultural education, the development of students' critical thinking, active listening and conflict resolution skills — these are tools classroom teachers offer to help prepare students for the future.

There is another truth we must remember: the same high court that affirmed the value of diversity in college admissions has issued a series of decisions contributing to the resegregation of K-12 schools.

A 2002 report from the Harvard Civil Rights Project (www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu) concluded that today's schools are less racially and ethnically diverse than they were 15 years ago.

- Virtually all of the school districts analyzed suffered from decreasing levels of interracial exposure. In some districts, the declines were sharp.
- In almost every school district, Black and Latino students had become more segregated from Whites.

On the heels of the Supreme Court's ruling in *Grutter v. Bollinger* and on the eve of the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*, let us remember that the early and essential work of diversity education begins not in the ivory towers of higher education, but in the classrooms of teachers like you.

Teaching Tolerance

NUMBER 24 • FALL 2003

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Hear & Now

News and musings of interest

Men Who Teach Young Children

We can all contribute to the recruitment and retention of male teachers. Use the following questions to review your beliefs and assumptions about men teachers.

- What do you think is the value of having male teachers?
- What are the drawbacks of not having men teachers for young children?
- What beliefs do you have about how well men can fulfill the role of teaching young children?
- Do you welcome all men as teachers or only some kinds of men? Which kinds? Why?
- What do you believe happens when males enter the early childhood field? Do they strengthen the field? Do they take away power from women? What other effects do they have? Why?
- What would your program be like if half the staff were men?
- How do you encourage families to welcome and accept men as teachers of their young children?

Reprinted with permission from Young Children, *"Special Issue: Men in the Lives of Children," November 2002.*

Dear Editor,

I would like to comment on the fine article by Candace Frazier on sexual harassment in your #23 Spring edition 2003. I feel it is an uphill battle partially caused by the "macho syndrome" that is prevalent in our culture and affects males in so many negative ways.

I would like to make a point that I feel is often overlooked or misunderstood about boys with "entitlement syndrome." They usually resort to teasing, and calling [names] because of ... low self-esteem, not always because of huge egos. Young people trying to deal with sexual harassment should be aware of this when trying to approach the problem in a positive way.

David Sparks, Superintendent
Osage County, Mo.
R-I School District

Women, Minorities Still Earn Less

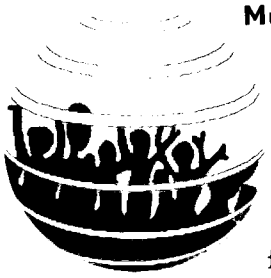
Educational gaps between genders and races have narrowed in recent years, but highly educated White men still make more money than anyone else.

On average in 2001, women who worked full time earned about 76 cents for every $1 a man earned. African American women earned 69 cents on the dollar compared to Caucasian males, while Hispanic women earned only 56 cents on the dollar, according to Census Bureau estimates released in March 2003.

Ho'oponopono

A native Hawaiian tradition emphasizes forgiveness to resolve conflicts. The practice, now widely used by businesses and other groups in the state, is based on the belief that we carry inside us all the significant people in our lives. Through visualization, conversation and forgiveness, Ho'oponopono enables us to make things "right" with those people.

For more information, go to www.huna.com/ho-oponopono.html.



Multicultural Materials for Children

Colorful World, a women-owned organization, offers high-quality, culturally and linguistically diverse literature and other materials for children from birth to age 14, as well as individual consultation and workshops for educators, child care professionals and community organizations.

For information:

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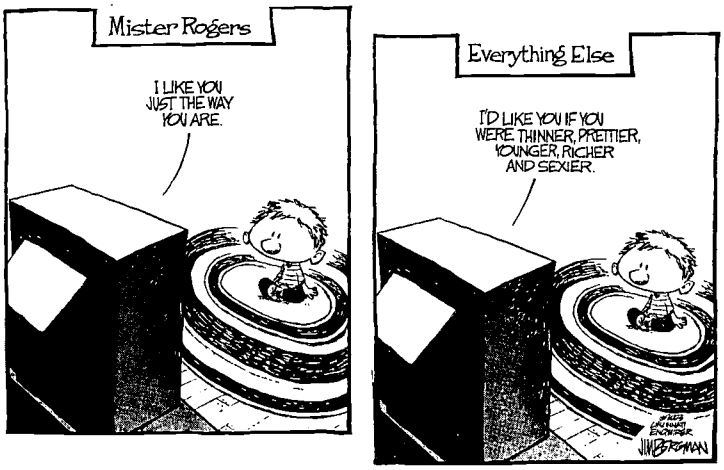
(800) 934-3866
(703) 764-2070 - fax
info@colorfulworld.com
www.colorfulworld.com



"It is useless to try to adjudicate a long-standing animosity by asking who started it or who is the most wrong. The only sufficient answer is to give up the animosity and try forgiveness, to try to love our enemies and to talk to them and (if we pray) to pray for them. If we can't do any of that, then we must begin again by trying to imagine our enemies' children who, like our children, are in mortal danger because of enmity that they did not cause."

WENDELL BERRY IN "A CITIZEN'S RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA" WWW.ORIONONLINE.ORG/PAGES/OM/03-2OM/BERRY.HTML

College Views

Most college students follow politics and consider themselves patriotic but only one out of three is registered to vote, a national survey found. The October 2002 report by the Institute of Politics at Harvard University also found that:

- The single greatest predictor of whether college students will make community service a priority is whether or not they volunteered in high school.
- African American students were more skeptical of the political system but also more likely to be politically active than any other ethnic group.
- More than a third of students reported they would be very likely to attend a political rally or demonstration if a friend asked them. Nearly a quarter said they would be likely to volunteer on a political campaign if asked by a friend.

For the full report, including recommendations for motivating students into public service, go to: www.aacu-edu.org/aacu_news/February03/facts_figures.htm.

Dear Editor,

I was shocked and dismayed to see the entrenched ignorance and prejudice about gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people perpetuated on page 9 of the Fall 2002 issue. While Amy Cohen is congratulating herself and her chapter of the Cub and Boy Scouts, she should examine her own prejudicial attitudes: "Since the Cub Scouts were too young to discuss the policy in question...." (referring to the barring of gays). Why are 6-to 11-year-olds too young to discuss gay issues? I think Ms. Cohen... [is] confusing sexual orientation with sexual behavior. It would not be appropriate to discuss any kind of sexual behavior with 6-to 11-year-olds. Discussions of sexual orientation and the Boy Scouts would be discussions about respect for differences.... Should gay parents keep their sexual orientation a secret until the children are old enough to find out?... I have lesson plans, materials and even a film I made of an assembly dealing with gay issues for 5- to 11-year-olds. Maybe you should get in touch with me!

Ellen Press, founder
GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network)
Peninsula/South Bay
presbeckr@aol.com
(415) 564-6473

Idea Exchange

A forum for sharing classroom strategies

Amazing Labyrinths

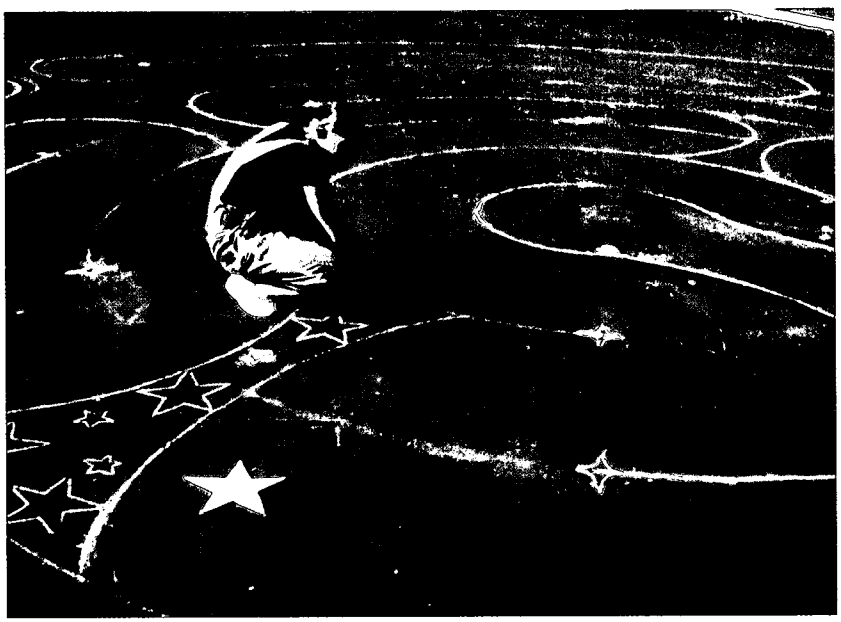
My students and I have discovered the power of labyrinths for building community at our high school. They're easy and inexpensive to create (a few simple tools and measurements, using chalk or paint on pavement). They invite teamwork. And they draw on universal themes — these intricate pathways appear in cultural traditions around the world.

Although the terms *labyrinth* and *maze* are often used interchangeably, differentiating between the two is easy: A labyrinth has one path in and out, with no "dead ends," whereas a maze can have many paths in and out, and many dead ends.

There are many theories about the origins of labyrinths. Evidence of these intricate pathways dates back more than 3,000 years in the Mediterranean region, and ancient labyrinth sites have been discovered in India, the British Isles, Scandinavia, Peru and Arizona. An elaborate medieval labyrinth at Chartres Cathedral in France is thought to have originated as a symbolic "pilgrimage route" for Christians unable to make the journey to Jerusalem.

In various religious and secular settings today, walking a labyrinth is meant to help clarify a "seeker's" path. Walking a maze, on the other hand, can help one consider the many options in one's path.

To plan a labyrinth for your school, find a flat area of unobstructed pavement between 60 and 100 feet in each direction. There are easy-to-follow instructions for making several standard types of labyrinths at *www.labyrinthsociety.org*. Our project involved the varied skills and talents of many students, from the artists who created banners for the plaza and embellished the labyrinth design, to the mathematicians who plotted the path and the handy crew who translated the plan into reality.



A California high school student creates a labyrinth with simple tools and chalk.

My students and I have discussed the labyrinth as a metaphor. "It's like the walk through life," says Josh, a 12th grader. Do you always "step aside" for others or make them step aside for you? Do you skip right to the center? Do you cut corners? Are you slow and methodical? All of us have tendencies and patterns that rule our lives. The labyrinth walk can help us identify our patterns, as well as safely try out new ones. We can then learn to negotiate our "walk" with others, working toward peace, balance and harmony.

Marcia Lynn Didtler
Burroughs High School
Ridgecrest, Calif.

Rash Decisions

One day last year, I read my 7th-grade students a newspaper article about a young man who made an impulsive, ill-fated decision. He decided to throw a large rock off an overpass on to the cars below that were traveling down the interstate highway. The rock smashed through the front windshield of a car driven by a minister on his way home

from a christening. The rock struck the minister in his head, leaving him disfigured and permanently blind. Later, the young rock thrower came forward and admitted his guilt. He was charged as an adult with attempted murder and vandalism. At his sentencing, wiping away the tears, he told the judge that he couldn't believe that the *one bad thing* he ever did in his life had hurt so many people. The judge sentenced him to 12 years in prison.

Discussing articles like these in class can help young people understand the potential consequences of acting on raw impulses. Begin by searching your local newspaper for stories about young people whose rash decisions adversely changed their lives. Identify one article that you can use for dramatic effect in your classroom and share it with your students. Discuss it and help them identify the rash decision and the consequences. Ask students to express their feelings about the story. Announce that for extra credit you want them to bring in similar articles that describe a poor, hastily made decision of a young person and the effects of that judgment.

Help them differentiate between poor decision-making and overt criminal acts. Explain that a rash decision is a thoughtless act made without careful consideration of the consequences, but an overt criminal act is committed with the intent to do wrong or harm.

When the first article comes in, you're ready to set the pattern for future discussions. First, read the article yourself to ensure that the content is age-appropriate. Then, ask the student who brought in the article to read it to the class. After the student has finished reading, write "Decision" and "Consequences" on the board. Have volunteers identify the rash decision that was made by the young person in the article and the aftermath. Ask your students to express their opinions about the decision in question.

Add the column "Alternative Behaviors" on the board. Brainstorm with your class a list of all the other choices the young person could have made to prevent the unwanted consequences and discuss the implications of each. Finally, ask volunteers to suggest some lessons the class can learn from the particular scenario.

After you've discussed the articles, display them in a prominent place in your classroom. I reserve a bulletin board for the activity, called "Lessons in Life." Set aside a regular time, perhaps weekly, for discussing new examples. Ideally, after a few sessions, invite the school counselor to your classroom to teach a lesson on decision-making skills.

If in the future, any of our discussions about these news items guides one student to pause and reconsider a reckless decision, then this activity was well worth the time and effort. I never want any of them to say, as the young rock thrower said at his sentencing, "I can't believe the one bad thing I did has hurt so many people."

Jeff Eccleston
Spring School
Toledo, Ohio

The Mystery of Intolerance

In my 12th grade English classroom, I use the Sherlock Holmes stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to reinforce a variety of skills. "The Yellow Face," first published in 1893 and not widely known today, is unique among the Holmes stories because it deals with interracial marriage. The situation it depicts and the questions it raises make for deeply felt and engaging classroom discussions and essays. And the instant recognition of the Holmes name ensures student acceptance.

Here's a synopsis: Holmes' client is Grant Munro, a young man, excitable and impatient. Effie, his wife of three years, has begun to act strangely, and her behavior seems to be centered around a cottage down the road from their house and the mysterious people who have moved in there. Grant has seen in an upper window a face — rigid and chalky white — watching him. He has had no luck entering the cottage or confronting its inhabitants.

Holmes suspects a blackmail plot. He, Watson and Grant Munro force their way into the

cottage over the entreaties of Effie. Upstairs, they discover a little girl. Her livid, impassive face is actually a mask, and when the mask is removed, a surprising secret comes to light.

Effie explains that the child is hers from her first marriage to a Black man who died in Atlanta. Leaving the daughter in America to regain her health, Effie returned home to England and later sent for the child and put her up with a faithful servant in the cottage. Effie feared that she might lose Grant if he learned the truth. After hearing the story, her husband accepts the child and Effie, and the three go home together.

Open-ended questions like the ones below work equally well as student essay or discussion prompts:

- Why did Effie hide her daughter in the cottage? What did she believe her husband would think about her prior marriage? How did she herself feel about it? How did those feelings influence her actions?
- How do you think the little girl felt about having to hide and wear the mask and gloves? How would you feel? How do you suppose her mother explained the need for it? Do you think that having to hide was harmful to the child? Why or why not?
- Effie Munro was faced with the problem of doing what she thought was right and taking the consequences. What do you think of her decision? What would you have done? Do you think most other people think as you do? Why or why not?
- The little girl in the story had a White mother and a Black father. What was her own racial identity? How do you arrive at that answer? How would the society in which the girl lived have answered that question? How would our society answer today? What do these answers say about racial identity?

I find it helpful to provide some historical context. Effie and her first husband were risking jail time and the nullification of their marriage in Georgia. At the time they were married, in the 1880s, thirty states had laws against interracial marriage. It's unclear whether Conan Doyle was aware of this.

Bringing other artistic works into the mix can further the discussion of racial identity. Good examples include the musical *Showboat,* by Oscar Hammerstein III and Jerome Kern (the 1936 movie version is best), with its subplot of Julie and Steve's forbidden love, and Ursula K. LeGuin's *The Lathe of Heaven,* which includes a scheme to end racial prejudice by turning everyone the same shade of gray.

Using Sherlock Holmes doesn't exactly make teaching tolerance "elementary," but it can provide clues to the mysteries of intolerance.

Jim Cort
Sussex County Vocational-Technical School
Sparta, N.J.

Culture Chats

Inviting the parents of our Afghani students for breakfast during Ramadan, a month of

dawn-to-dusk fasting for Muslims, showed our lack of understanding of one of the many cultures in our public school. My colleagues and I wondered, "How many other cultural missteps have we made?" How could we avoid similar errors and create a more inclusive school environment where people of all backgrounds would feel comfortable?

We had a vision of developing a cadre of learners who understand the cultural diversity of their community and apply this knowledge in practice. This seemed like a daunting task, because nearly 40 percent of our students speak a language other than English at home. We developed a plan through the collaborative efforts of the school guidance counselor, the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher and a professor at nearby Montclair State University.

Initially, we surveyed the entire student body to determine countries of origin and languages spoken at home. Then we welcomed the parents to a Back to School Night with multilingual signs. We watched as parents smiled while pointing to the sign written in their own language. This simple gesture acknowledged the value of their presence. Next, we invited parents of similar cultural backgrounds to attend daytime or evening "Culture Chats." Our intention was to gather information about cultures, needs, expectations and perspectives on education, as a way of breaking down barriers and building bridges.

Our Culture Chats included from Afghanistan, India, Mexico, Peru, Colombia, Taiwan, South Korea, Russia, the Philippines, Macedonia and the Ukraine. By asking *them* to teach *us*, we affirmed their role as contributing members of the school community. Following each Culture Chat, students shared cultural information with the entire school community at assemblies. To our surprise, the initiative also built bridges within cultures. We overheard students saying, "I didn't know there were so many people from my country in this school," and parents sought out each other's phone numbers. As the year progressed, we noticed increased presence of these parents at school events.

The intercultural theme carried over into staff development. We conducted an in-service program to sensitize faculty members to their own diversity through interactive experiences that they could replicate in the classroom. The extent of the sharing in these activities far exceeded the usual teacher interaction. As with our students and their families, we learned that people love to tell their own stories and that others are eager to listen.

To extend the impact, we developed a booklet of the information gathered during the Culture Chats. Now, each teacher has a handbook describing the social customs and educational practices of the cultures within our school. From our initial concerns about a cultural *faux pas*, the connections continue to grow.

Fran Greb and Rebecca Clark
Montclair (N.J.) State University
and Knollwood School
Parsippany, N.J.

Grant Spotlight

To find out how you can apply for a Teaching Tolerance grant, visit www.teachingtolerance.org/grants

Many Faces, Many Voices

BY ANNIE BOLLING

Teachers in East Lansing, Mich., are collaborating with LATTICE (Linking All Types of Teachers to International Cross-Cultural Education) in a literature-based project to teach their students about global issues. Developed in 1995 as a cross-cultural partnership, LATTICE links six school districts in mid-Michigan with international graduate students at Michigan State University. Participants come from six continents and more than 30 countries.

According to Marianne Forman, social studies and English teacher at MacDonald Middle School, "This professional development model has greatly increased teachers' understanding of the diversity of cultures around the world, which in turn promotes a cross-cultural perspective in the classroom."

With the support of a Teaching Tolerance grant, Forman and 19 other teachers took part in a learning project that links children's literature and personal contact with people of different ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. The group selected and read together seven books for children and young adults that focus on beliefs, practices and histories in other countries. rding to Sally McClintock, LATTICE coordinator, "Some books were chosen because they are appropriate or because we suspect that they are *not* appropriate but are already being used in the schools. Our readings and discussions prepared us to make better decisions about what books to use in our classrooms."

Although the group identified minor errors in one book, the South African participants considered it a good starting place for students to learn about Apartheid. A book about refugees was not recommended for schools after graduate students noted that it did not accurately reflect the refugee experience. They also pointed out that the characters were not well developed and, therefore, not believable.

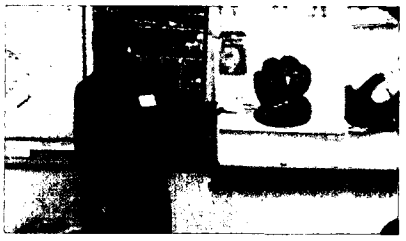
After the teachers share their perceptions and insight with each other, they help students take part in a similar evaluation process. Next, they invite graduate students to the classrooms to discuss their cultures and share personal perspectives about issues raised in the books.

7th graders at MacDonald Middle School along with their teacher and LATTICE member, Motosem Al Sayahein, share Jordanian story books.

Forman sees this partnership as an opportunity for teachers to give more than cursory attention to promoting tolerance in the classroom. According to Forman, "International, cross-cultural education is not taught extensively or in depth in many schools, and teachers cite their own lack of knowledge about cultures different from their

own as one reason."

After students at a small rural Michigan school read *Jordanian Short Stories*, a Jordanian student and her family visited for an interactive session. Parents and students reported that it was a learning experience that



increased their understanding of Jordanian geography and Arab culture.

McClintock reflects on the positive impact of the project. "Teachers have gained new knowledge about six different continents. They are familiar with a bibliography that can be used in their classrooms, and they are also familiar with 'people' resources, both staff and students, at Michigan State University."

For educators interested in replicating the project, McClintock offers the following suggestions:

First, find out about the cultural diversity in your area. Community members, parents of K-12 students and university students can be assets. Next, recruit interested teachers among friends and colleagues and then extend the search to a school district. Publicize the get-togethers and the results. Soon the group will come to include people from diverse cultures.

Can We Cross the Bridge?

An innovative program is broadening students' horizons through human rights activities. Country Day, a K-8th-grade international school in Madison, Ala., is part of The Cross Border Primary Human Rights Education Initiative. The project offers young people from different cultures a chance to develop friendships and exchange ideas. "It is our hope," says Peggy Good, a 2nd-grade teacher and coordinator of diversity training and outreach campaigns at the school, "that when we expose young people from different cultures to each other and provide them with the means to communicate and develop friendships, the walls of intolerance will dissolve."

Country Day partnered with one school in Northern Ireland and another in the Republic of Ireland. "The aim is to promote a basic awareness of the concept of human rights with particular emphasis on the experiences of children around the world. If we want to have a more peaceful future for our children, we have to identify the building blocks that will create that foundation," says Good.

The school has an extended program of human rights activities. With the support of a Teaching Tolerance grant, Good was able to enhance the program with a yearlong project for her students and their partners. To prepare the staff, Good conducted an in-service and distributed material incorporating a "whole school" approach to human rights education.

Classes participated in monthly activities beginning with an in-depth study of the history of the divided island of Ireland and its continued struggle with political unrest. They constructed a time line comparing the situation in Northern Ireland with the American Civil Rights Movement. To extend the study, Good's class conducted a field study in Selma and Montgomery, Ala. They crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma to reenact the Voting Rights March of 1965.

Participants in the project corresponded with each other via the Internet. They compiled a document of correspondence including poems, short stories and letters. During a recent trip to Ireland, Good delivered the collection and conducted a program on tolerance at one of the schools. She shared the philosophy of her school, which has 17 nationalities and seven languages represented.

Students at Country Day wrote and performed a play titled "Crossing Borders to Greater Understanding," which is a symbolic look at the 30-year conflict between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. In the play leprechauns (the Irish Republic) and fairies (Northern Ireland) unite as friends after 900 years of separation caused by the trolls who represent the intolerance that kept the two factions apart. "The message" says Good, "is that as we move toward global understanding, it is important for students to understand the responsibility of governments and individuals in promoting appropriate human rights standards." •

Annie Bolling is the Teaching Tolerance grants administrator.

A Standard to Sustain

Vermont students claim their legacy of participatory democracy

BY MARY M. HARRISON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARIO MORGADO

Snowshoes strapped to her boots, senior Sarah Simpson moves easily along the ski trail behind Harwood Union High School, nestled in the Green Mountains in South Duxbury, Vt. She knows and loves the 85 acres of land surrounding her school, recently named the Harwood Common Ground.

Her cheeks are flame-red on this sub-zero February morning, but Sarah seems oblivious to the cold. She's sharing a vision for new uses of this land that she believes could help students enjoy school more and find purpose in their education. In a few weeks, she'll present her ideas to the Harwood faculty.

In Sarah's vision, the school's wood tech classes are designing and building the sturdy bridges that are needed on the trails. They are also maintaining the trail system, sawing and removing fallen trees like the birch lying across the trail today. Health and cooking classes are growing food year-round in a greenhouse constructed by students. They are using part of their harvest in class and taking part to the local "food shelf," which supplies food to people with low incomes. A Social Studies/English class is gathering oral histories from longtime area residents.

Throughout Vermont, at every grade level, students

At Vermont's Harwood High School, students use class time to focus on the changes they want to see take hold in their communities.

like Sarah are finding innovative ways to get involved with issues that challenge their communities and affect their future. The efforts reflect a 2000 state commitment to education for sustainability.

Sustainability lacks a standard definition, although people usually grasp the concept quickly. Its root means "to keep in existence; maintain." It has come to mean the ability to meet present needs without damaging or depleting the environmental, economic or social resources that future generations will need.

Vermont educators often describe sustainability as a lens through which to analyze use of resources. By asking students to build enduring visions for strong communities, sustainability education enhances critical thinking and problem-solving and builds hope for the future.

Education for sustainable development has commanded global attention since 1992, when the United Nations Earth Summit drew the largest gathering of world leaders in history to Rio de Janeiro to reconcile worldwide economic development with environmental protection. After the conference, a comprehensive plan for global, national and local action, known as Agenda 21, was developed, with one chapter devoted entirely to education for sustainability.

"Agenda 21 has not become a household word in the U.S., but we took it seriously in Vermont," says Megan Camp, program director at Shelburne Farms, a nonprofit environmental education center that practices sustainable rural land use.

Most exciting to Camp about Agenda 21 was the interconnection of subjects in new ways. "We already recognized environmental issues, but not social justice or economic issues," Camp says. "Sustainability was a way to bring them all together."

Nonprofits like Shelburne Farms and state agencies concerned with agriculture, wildlife, forests and recreation have a long history of involvement with Vermont schools. In 1998, when the state's first framework of educational standards was put in place in schools, teachers voiced concerns about the effect state standards would have on teaching and learning. Would there still be time for such things as community studies, environmental and agricultural education, and service learning projects?

With support from the Department of Education, Camp spearheaded an effort by 30 state agencies and nonprofits to hold focus groups and find out what Vermonters thought students should learn in school.

The consortium recommended, and in 2000 the State Board of Education approved, two new standards: "sustainability" and "understanding

place" *(see Document)*. The standards were naturals for the small, rural state with a history of connection to the land through family farming and a tradition of participatory democracy through annual Town Meetings.

The consortium evolved into Vermont Education for Sustainability (VTEFS), which provides teacher training and support for sustainability education.

"For many of the consortium partners," says Camp, "sustainability was a newfangled word for an old Vermont tradition."

Sustainability education works in different ways at different schools. At Harwood Union High, civics teacher Jean Berthiaume launched the Co/Motion class in 2002. He got the idea for the class, which is open to all grades, from a guide to youth-led social change of the same name *(see Resources)*. In Berthiaume's view, the "motion" in the course title is the change a person wants to make in the community. The "co" is the embracing of differing perspectives on the issue that must precede the motion, if the change is to be embraced and "sustained" by the community.

Co/Motion students choose a project by identifying and researching a problem in their school or community. They learn to plan meetings, develop a budget, publicize the project and evaluate their efforts.

In addition to student Sarah Simpson's land-use project, Co/Motion students have tackled difficult social issues. One group has worked to restructure the Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA) and thereby renew student interest in it. They also organized Diversity Week activities, cutting large red silhouettes of teens and hanging them throughout the school, accompanied by statistics related to minority groups, such as rates of suicide among gay, lesbian and transgendered teens. They posted a daily quiz in the front hall, with questions about minority races and religions, answered the next day.

The students are also lobbying to bring in an organization called Outright Vermont to train teachers who are willing to label their rooms as "safe space" for students who want to discuss sexual orientation.

One of the Diversity Week organizers, Jess Savage, says the most useful skill she has gained from her Co/Motion project is respectful communication. In the past, she says, when she dealt with people who held opposing views, "It was more of a victory kind of thing. Now it's an understanding. ... You want to interact on grounds that will make it possible that even if the person doesn't agree with you, you can still respect each other."

For Berthiaume, respect is an essential ingredient in the "glue" that holds the sprawling sustainability concept together: respect for the environment, for social differences and for one's neighbors. Harwood Union serves about 650 high school students from six nearby

DOCUMENT

Standard-Bearer

Vermont State Standards:
3.9 Sustainability (Personal Development):
Students make decisions that demonstrate understanding of human and natural communities, the ecological, economic, political or social systems within them, and awareness of how their personal and collective actions affect the sustainability of these interrelated systems.

4.6 Understanding Place (Civic & Social Responsibility):
Students demonstrate understanding of the relationship between their local environment and community heritage and how each shapes their lives.

towns. Some are blue-collar, others upscale ski communities. Although there is little racial or cultural diversity in the school, students differ in other ways, including the way they dress and their religion, socioeconomic status, heritage, sexual orientation, grade level and academic performance. As in any school, students may be rejected for any of those factors. Social sustainability involves strengthening bonds within a community that might otherwise be divided by prejudices.

Teachers, too, face prejudices. Berthiaume has been open about his identity as a gay man in a committed relationship—now a civil union—since he was hired in 1995. Students' respect for him is evident in the classroom and hallways. But during the 1999-2000 school year, when a state law was being debated that would make same-sex unions legal, the subject of sexual orientation was highly contentious. The school had no established discussion groups in which students might talk about the controversy, and tensions sometimes threatened to break out in fisticuffs.

The ideal venue for addressing the debate turned out to be Berthiaume's civics elective, Creating Sustainable Communities (CSC). The class was already accustomed to evaluating controversial issues related to the environment, the economy and human rights by reading about them and then discussing and debating all positions in a respectful manner. Through that process, students were able to weigh all views on civil unions and arrive at their own informed opinions.

To help students gain a thorough understanding of each issue, Berthiaume assigns readings and short books but doesn't use a textbook for

A Standard for All

Vermont is the only state that includes sustainability in its educational standards. How can teachers in other states, who may already feel overwhelmed by pressures to cover existing standards, introduce the concept?

Susan Santone, founder of the nonprofit organization Creative Change Educational Solutions, Inc. *(see Resources)*, in Ypsilanti, Mich., has helped teachers do that since 1998 and notes that schools may find support for sustainability from their own local environmental and planning departments. A former teacher, Santone wrote and recently revised a sustainability curriculum, *The Shape of Change*.

Teachers should think of sustainability as an approach, rather than something extra to teach, Santone says.

"You can teach with a sustainable focus without ever using the word, by looking at social, environmental and economic perspectives," she points out. Santone uses questions like "What kind of world do you want your children to live in?" and "What's happening in the world that's advancing or threatening the kind of world you want?" to help teachers in different disciplines find their own entrées into sustainability.

Next Santone helps them find existing standards they can use to teach sustainability. Although interdisciplinary teams work best, she notes, teachers working independently can point out connections to other subjects.

- Useful science standards may relate to inquiry, science in the real world and the implications of technology.
- Social studies standards often include geography and human impact on the environment.
- Math teachers can help students conduct various analyses of data related to sustainability issues.
- Language arts teachers can incorporate writing standards by having students write related press releases, peer education materials and Power Point presentations.

The approach has worked in Michigan, where standards such as "Explain how events have causes and consequences in different parts of the world" and "Describe major world patterns of economic activity and explain reasons for the patterns" have been used successfully to bolster the teaching of sustainability.

CSC. The issues studied are local ones related to sustainability, he explains, and they change from year to year. "I'm always researching, trying to keep up with what's happening in local communities," he says.

Last year, the major issue was the Champion Lands project. After a paper mill corporation in an area called the Northeast Kingdom of Vermont had shut down in 1997, the state was given 22,000 acres in which to establish an ecological reserve. Land use has always been important to Vermonters, so use of the reserve became the heart of a statewide debate. Should logging, hunting and fishing, other recreational uses and public access be part of the new plan, and if so, to what degree and where?

Berthiaume prepared folders of information about the ecological reserve that included House bills under consideration, Web sites, maps, letters to the editor in newspapers from various parts of Vermont and opinion pieces. After students formulated their own positions on use of the core reserve, they wrote letters to their state senators and representatives and to editors of their local newspapers. Most heard back from legislators, and many of their letters appeared in the papers.

In place of midterm exams last year, CSC students researched a situation in their community they wanted to change and then chose a way to present their research to the community. Many did so in booths set up at their local Town Meetings, held throughout the state on the first Tuesday in March. Others made videos for broadcast on their local cable station or sent opinion pieces to newspapers. Proposals included a local teen help-line, river clean-ups and campaigns for support of local farmers and businesses.

Some CSC students felt most empowered by communication with the school board during their study of Dr. Martin Luther King and the Civil Rights Movement. At the time their school did not observe the national holiday commemorating him. The students discussed the best ways of honoring him, with some favoring special events at school that day and others a holiday.

Openly gay teacher Jean Berthiaume used a civics elective, Creating Sustainable Communities, to provide students a safe place to weigh in on Vermont's controversial civil union law.

They sent their proposals to school board members, who decided to observe the holiday. Students who favored special activities also got their wish, because last year Harwood Union also held its first Martin Luther King all-school assembly.

CSC students report a new awareness of local and global issues, more discussions with their families about those issues, new strategies they and their families have adopted to conserve resources, new interest in supporting local businesses, and a belief that they can and will make changes in their school and communities. "CSC gives you the tools to get involved in your community and change it for the better," says sophomore Katurah Zahler.

"Before, I didn't think many people would listen if I spoke out, because I'm a 16-year-old kid," says Nick Eid. "But this class showed me

that people will listen."

That kind of change in thinking gives new meaning to the concept of teaching civics, says principal Robin Pierce. She and associate principal John McGuire say that classes like CSC and Co/Motion have made the school a far more tolerant place in recent years. Students who farm, students who hunt, students with green hair or multiple piercings, students dressed in long capes — all seem able to be more accepting of one another at school.

A recent all-school assembly was a perfect example of the change, McGuire says. Co/Motion students working on the Diversity Week project invited everyone to the school's Common Grounds Café Thursday night for a viewing of "The Laramie Project," a film about the brutal murder of gay student Matthew Shepard.

"The significance wasn't the announcement itself," McGuire says. "It's that there were no behavioral issues related to that announcement. No cat-calling, no talking, just respectful applause. And then we moved on to the next item, a girl singing jazz."

CSC and Co/Motion classes have also influenced the school recycling program, beautification projects, and the school's new Justice Project, says Pierce. Directed by McGuire, the Justice Project's original goal was replacement of zero tolerance policies with flexible, educational approaches to student misbehavior. With input from administrators, teachers, students and parents and with support from state and private organizations, the initiative now encompasses family conferences, peer mediation and study circles. In the future, when students have concerns about issues like the civil union law or the ramifications of war or the school dress code, they'll be able to discuss them.

In Berthiaume's mind, those efforts, like CSC and Co/Motion student projects, strengthen the school community, heighten student roles as civic partners, and lead to a better future for their towns – the very essence of sustainability.

"Using sustainability, we can encourage active citizen participation, even by young children," he says. "Democracy doesn't start at 18. Students of all ages can participate in democracy through dialogue on issues and problems within the community." •

Mary M. Harrison, a frequent contributor to Teaching Tolerance, is based in St. Charles, Mo.

RESOURCES

Co/Motion Guide to Youth-Led Social Change ($35) is a 298-page, reader-friendly manual packed with information, strategies and inspiration to help young people effect change in their communities.
Alliance for Justice
(202) 822-6070
www.afj.org

The nonprofit Creative Change Educational Solutions provides curricula and professional development on sustainability, ecological economics and anti-discrimination.
Creative Change Educational Solutions
(734) 482-0924
www.creativechange.net

Educators will find the *Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit* by Rosalyn McKeown informative and easy to use. It can be downloaded for free from the Web or ordered in print ($20) or CD ($16).
www.esdtoolkit.org

UNESCO's *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future* is an online professional development program that provides extensive resources for teachers.
www.unesco.org/education/tlsf

The Education for a Sustainable Future Web site offers teachers a wide variety of downloadable software and units for all grade levels, most with a technological bent.
http://csf.concord.org/esf

The Sustainability Education Center (SEC) Web site provides extensive educational materials and professional development. Links include "Kindergarten Through Twelfth-Grade Education for Sustainability," a chapter from the book *Stumbling Toward Sustainability*, co-authored by SEC staff.
www.sustainabilityed.org

Preserve a child's right to create and explore

LET'S JUST PLAY

BY JANET SCHMIDT • PHOTOGRAPHY BY VALERIE DOWNES

"[Participating countries] recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts." ARTICLE 31, PART 1, OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

The Lesson of Pow

By Kathy Briccetti

The only thing my 5-year-old son, Morgan, liked about kindergarten was playing with his new friends at recess. "But they always play Power Rangers tag," he said as I tucked him into bed one night. "And I don't like action figure games."

"Why not?" I asked as I snuggled next to him on his narrow bed. I wanted to take advantage of my son's opening up like this. Usually when I ask Morgan about his day I get grunts or monosyllabic responses.

"I don't know how to play Power Ranger tag," he said, adjusting his pillow to make room for me. "I just like regular tag."

Despite his distress, I felt a rush of pride. We've prohibited gunplay and network television in our house and banned violent computer games. Both sons attended a

"I like the pink ranger!"
"My favorite is red."
"Mine, too!"

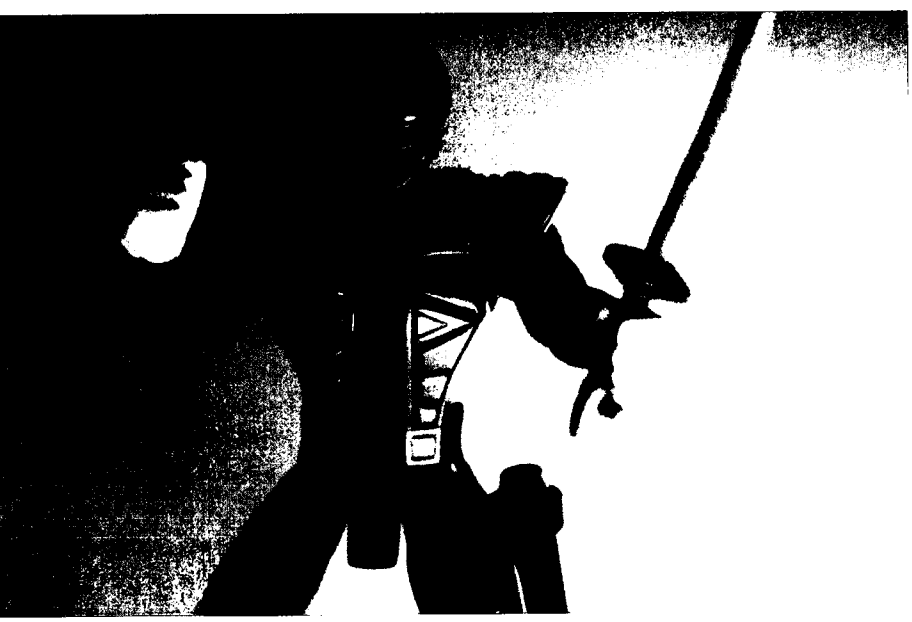
The *Mighty Morphin Power Rangers* captured the imaginations of the 3- and 4-year-olds in my suburban Boston public preschool class. For one little girl, whose language development was delayed, even the experience of naming her first few colors fell "captive" to the Rangers' original color scheme — pink, blue, red, yellow and black. Although I was pleased with the child's growing vocabulary, it disturbed me that her grasp of color concepts was connected to a violent TV show.

I should not have been surprised.

The plot of a typical *Power Rangers* episode features several fight scenes, complete with high kicks, powerful weapons, loud yells and grunts. Frequent commercial breaks promote other violent shows and toys. In the span of just one TV show, a child's vision is captivated and dominated by violence. And away from the screen, related action figures, lunch boxes, sheets, underwear and books ensure that Power Rangers images are ever present.

Children have a right to play. The idea is so simple it seems self-evident. But a stroll through any toy superstore, or any half-hour of so-called "children's" programming on commercial TV, makes it clear that violence, not play, dominates what's being sold.

The problem got much worse in 1984, when the Federal Communications Commission deregulated children's television, paving the way for program-length commercials and massive marketing to children. In *Remote Control Childhood? Combating the Hazards of Media Culture* (1998), Diane Levin, professor of education at Wheelock College in Boston, writes that, within one year of deregula-



Educators and parents should ask: What kind of play does this kind of toy inspire?

tion, nine of the 10 best-selling toys were linked to TV shows and seven of these shows were violent.

Another study offers further proof.

The National Television Violence Study (*see Resources*) examined 10,000 hours of programming between 1994 and 1997 and found that 60 percent of all shows contained some kind of violence. The study also found that a preschool child watching two hours of cartoons each day will witness nearly 10,000 acts of violence each year.

Kathy Roberts, co-founder/director of the Dandelion School in Cambridge, Mass., from 1971 to 2002, has been following the evolution of children's play as a parent, grandparent and educator. In the 1970s, she and her colleagues observed that "children who watched little or no TV were more self-sufficient and creative in their play."

As the video culture boomed, however, violent TV and movie plots began to dominate the content of child's play, displacing the influence of children's imaginations and literature.

Roberts and her colleagues also observed an economic change. As marketing began to dominate children's entertainment, some families simply couldn't afford clothes and ac-

er Ranger Tag

preschool where they learned to resolve conflicts with their words. By raising two boys with limited exposure to violence I believe I'm doing what's best for them as well as contributing to a healthier society.

But now I was also struck with a different feeling. My son was being excluded from kindergarten playground games. No one told him he couldn't play, but thanks to me he was on the outskirts because he didn't know how to imitate action figures. I pictured my boy standing off to the side, or playing by himself on the playground rings on his first days of school.

It wasn't that Morgan had never played violent games. He and his older brother held up finger guns, paper guns and cardboard guns, and crashed their plastic animals into each other, making them fall on the floor and die loud, gruesome deaths. But he wasn't joining his friends at recess because he didn't know how to play this game.

Should I cave in and buy the fighting figures or hold out with the hope of a peaceful future? I knew the figures were never going away. Power Rangers, Pokemon, Spider Man. I'd have to find some compromise, some middle ground.

The next Saturday, Morgan and I stopped at a neighbor's yard sale. His allowance jingled in his pocket as he rummaged through a cardboard box full of action figures —hulking muscle men with brightly painted costumes striking fighting poses. Morgan looked up at me with a resigned look. "Mommy, could I buy these?" He sighed. I could tell by his voice he expected me to launch into my violent toy spiel. Instead I did something else. I told him as long as he didn't use them on any person or the dog, yes, he could buy them. He bought three, and with a huge grin he stuffed them into his pockets. He played with them for a couple of weeks, and then tossed them into his toy bin where they gradually sank to the bottom.

A few days later I asked Morgan about recess again. I pictured him playing alone and looking lost, but he quickly assured me he was playing with his friends.

"Did you learn the Power Rangers game?"

"No."

"What did you do?

"I asked them to play regular tag." He looked at me with a bemused smile. "And guess what, Mommy? They did."

Kathy Briccetti works as a school psychologist and freelance writer in the San Francisco Bay Area.

cessories tied to the latest media characters.

At the Dandelion School, Roberts and her colleagues worked against such influences. Parents and children alike understood that media-linked toys, clothes and backpacks stayed at home, and the school community could focus on topics from nature, children's own experiences and literature.

The policy got good reviews from parents.

As Roberts said, "When their children move on to public elementary school, they're bombarded with the media culture, and they feel like they have a grounding to deal with it."

Creative Play, With Direction

Teachers like Roberts and others promote creative play by providing a well-planned environment with engaging open-ended materials such as blocks, dolls, animal figures, paper, paint, glue, scissors, sand boxes and water tables. Children can create and explore, and teachers can be directly involved.

That direct involvement is especially important when children imitate what they've seen on TV and movie screens.

Tricia Windschitl and her colleagues at the Preucil Preschool in Iowa City, Iowa, take advantage of teachable moments that arise during play to interject ideas to make play more peaceful and respectful, while setting limits on pretend fighting. "Anything that makes someone feel uncomfortable or scared" is not allowed, Windschitl explains.

So if the boys are interested in Batman, Windschitl will encourage them to build a Batmobile, challenging their creativity and fostering cooperation.

"The focus goes away from the fighting and into more creative play," she says. "But if we completely ban superhero play, there is no opportunity to guide it."

Beyond preschool, recess becomes a testing ground for such play.

At first-grade teacher Sandra Rojas' school in Cambridge, Mass., students staked out part of the schoolyard as "Martian Land" in the 1980s. It has continued ever since, with boys and girls of various ages using rocks for money and setting up inventive trading-and-selling scenarios. "Real" toys are nowhere to be found.

"When there are no gadgets to play with," Rojas says, "they do really well coming together as a group."

Children's creativity in the absence of "store-bought play" is the core concept of World-Play, a grassroots project based in Atlanta that showcases toys made from found materials by children all over the world (*see Resources*). The group has also created Internet and videoconferencing opportunities that allow children to teach each other how to make such toys.

While adults can help by providing materials, suggesting safety guidelines and offering ideas, children have the right to bring their own ideas and expe-

ACTIVITY

Making Shoe Box Gifts

Usually, for children, gift giving means buying manufactured toys at a store. Here is an alternative gift idea: Shoe Box Gifts are collections of small, familiar items that are organized around a play theme. They also show that expensive toys in fancy packages aren't necessarily the best.

Decorate an empty shoe box (or a larger box if needed) and gather items related to the chosen theme. Build dividers into the box or use small containers or zip-lock bags to keep things organized. Note that some suggested items might require adult supervision. Have fun!

Here are two suggestions to get you started:

Garden Box

- Plastic lining
- Potting soil
- Seed packets
- Small watering can
- Popsicle sticks
- Garden tools
- Gardening gloves

Creating with Play Dough

- Buy some or make your own
- Garlic press
- Plastic knife
- Popsicle sticks
- Plastic lids
- Small tray/plate
- Plastic animals

Adapted with permission from TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment).

riences, even challenging ones, to life through play. Denise Janssen, a second-grade teacher in Madison, Wis., believes that denying children the opportunity to play is "taking away a right as necessary as eating or sleeping."

In support of that right, teachers and parents share responsibility to protect children from the onslaught of violent and scripted play ideas brought by TV, movies, video games and the vast collection of media-linked products.

Choosing Good Toys

Choosing appropriate toys can go a long way toward improving play opportunities for children.

The Good Toy Group (*see Resources*), currently made up of more than 50 U.S. toy retailers, emerged at the 2000 American Specialty Toy Retailers Association convention. Colleen Pope, owner of The Dollhouse Shop in Montgomery, Ala., was part of the original group and contributes to the production of a catalogue that features toys chosen on the basis of creative play value, cultural sensitivity and nonviolence.

"We go to the annual Toy Fair and work in teams, looking for the best new stuff. Then we meet, compare notes and decide what to put in the catalogue," Pope explains.

TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment), founded in 1995, also promotes creative and constructive play.

The group's Shoe Box Gifts (*see Activity, p. 22*) provide an antidote for the aggressive marketing of media-linked toys. Parents and teachers can help children discover ways to channel their interests into creative dramatic play, using simple props and

ACTIVITY

"We're Only Pretending."

Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment (TRUCE) created the following letter to help children and adults talk together about toys and play. Here's how to adapt it for use in your classroom:

Read the letter to your students:

To children everywhere:

Some kids really love toy guns and toys with weapons on them. They have fun pretending to fight with them. A lot of teachers worry about weapon toys. They think that if kids play with these toys and pretend to fight and kill, it will teach kids that it's OK to hurt people and that fighting and hurting is fun. Kids often say, "We're only pretending. We're just 'playing.'"

Some teachers say kids in their classes pretend to be characters on TV. Kids act out, kicking and fighting. Then kids often really do hurt each other. It gets scary. It isn't pretend, teachers say.

Many teachers are worried. They are angry that TV shows and ads make violent toys look cool so kids want to buy them. They say companies shouldn't be allowed to sell violent toys to kids on TV.

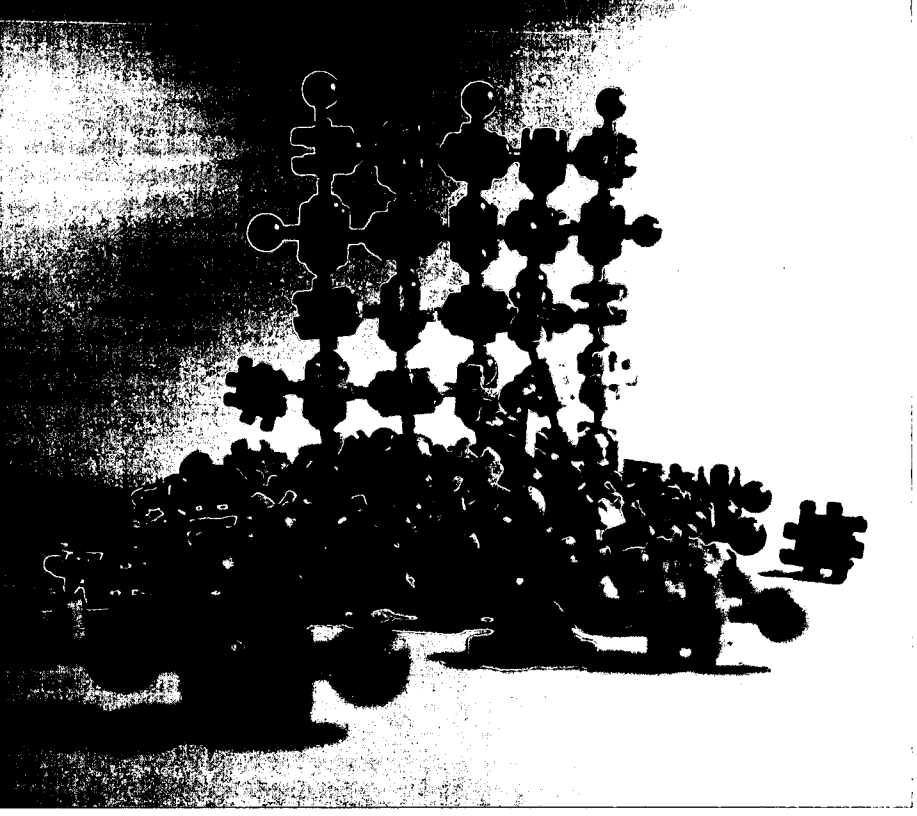
What do you think?

Sincerely,
The Teachers of TRUCE

As a class, discuss the following questions:

What do you think about what the teachers say? What do you think teachers, parents and children should do about violent, fighting toys? What can grown-ups do to help children be safe and learn not to fight? What ideas do you have about how children can play without fighting toys?

Adapted with permission from TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment).



Open-ended construction toys allow children to create what's in their imaginations.

collective imagination.

The TRUCE *Media Violence Guide* (*see Resources*) provides suggestions for adults who seek to minimize the effects of media culture and violence on children.

Screening Out Violence

According to The Lion and Lamb Project's short film *Video Games: The State of the "Art"*:

- 145 million Americans play video games;
- 65 million are under the age of 17;
- 20 million are 12 years old or younger;
- And 92 percent of 2- to 17-year-olds play video or computer games.

In addition, three different studies found that approximately 75 percent of youths between the ages of 13 and 16 who attempted to purchase M-rated (mature) video games were able to do so. Such M-rated games, including *Duke Nukem* and *Grand Theft Auto: Vice City*, depict graphic violence, complete with blood, vomit, sickening sounds and sexual images of women with exaggerated figures and scanty clothing. They include scenes of men beating prostitutes and encourages the player to shoot naked women who call out, "Kill me!"

While the First Amendment allows for the production of such violent material, adults are responsible for protecting children from exposure to it. Parents can't accomplish this alone; teachers, retailers and others need to monitor the video game world and take action to keep children safe from such images. Even E-rated (everybody) games include violent images, cautions Lion and Lamb's executive director Daphne White.

Also, be wary of videos and computer games with misleading terms such as "educational" and "interactive." Although such computer activities offer young users exciting choices and individualized responses to mouse clicks or screen touches, these are still no substitute for face-to-face interaction.

Children can learn to see the negative messages presented through entertainment and the manipulation involved in advertising. Teachers and parents can talk with children about what they see, and help them understand the realities that may conflict with the images on the screen.

Recently, for example, at the neighborhood video store, I heard a 5-year-old ask, "Dad, do all video games have violence?" Another 5-year-old, Morgan (*see In Focus*), persuaded his friends to play regular tag instead of Power Rangers tag at school.

'Fighting' Back

Recently, Lion and Lamb's White, seeing the need for heightened awareness and powerful, nationwide collaboration in order to reduce the marketing of violence to children, has organized a working group of representatives from several organizations.

Lion and Lamb also promotes community events such as Violent Toy Trade-Ins and Peaceable Play Days. Merle Forney, along with Jane and Dan Bucks, organized the first

WEB EXCLUSIVE

Visit our Web site for a collection of resources about mass-marketed toys and creative play. Log onto www.teachingtolerance.org/magazine; click on "Let's Just Play."

Trade-In in Columbia, Md., in 1995. Children who turned in a violent toy received a peacemaker certificate to use at a local specialty toy store. A team of sculptors helped attach the 300 collected toys to a serpent-shaped steel framework.

"A serpent sheds its skin, and the kids were also going through a transformation," recalls Forney, who now lives in Amesbury, Mass.

The first Trade-In took place on a Saturday, followed on Sunday by a "New Ways to Play Day," where parents and children participated together in a variety of creative, nonviolent play activities.

As Denise Janssen sees it, we have to find ways to work with children to build peaceful classrooms and to counteract the negative messages they get through TV and other media. Janssen and her teaching partner, Sue Harris, find time in the busy school day to learn what their young students think and feel, through role-playing, reading and discussion of good literature, and talking about good role models from the past and present.

"When we talk about real people who have made a difference in the world, the children are fully involved and enthusiastic. These are the best discussions of the day," she says.

The challenge lies in channeling these positive images into their play.

"Kids don't know how to turn off the TV," Janssen says, "so they learn that most people who look good *are* good, that people who are not good-looking are bad, and that the good guys usually win."

While these simplistic associations permeate play, teachers can remind their students of the real, multidimensional people who captured their attention during classroom discussions. With adult guidance, children can think more critically about the images they see on TV and movie screens.

"Play," asserts Janssen, "represents not only the culture in which the children live, but also the process through which they develop the skills and behaviors needed to live as conscientious adult citizens within their communities."

Play is a child's right, and protecting it is everyone's responsibility. •

Janet Schmidt, an educator in Wellesley, Mass. and member of TRUCE, was the 2002-03 Teaching Tolerance Research Fellow.

RESOURCES

Two books by Diane Levin support teachers' efforts to promote peace and safety in children's lives. *Remote Control Childhood? Combating the Hazards of Media Culture* ($15) offers practical background information and concrete suggestions for working with parents and children to counteract negative aspects of toys, entertainment and advertising. The second edition of *Teaching Young Children in Violent Times* ($24) is a guide to creating peaceful classrooms for children in preschool and Grades K-3.

National Association for the Education of Young Children
(866) 424-2460
www.naeyc.org

TRUCE (Teachers Resisting Unhealthy Children's Entertainment) is a network of early childhood professionals that fosters adult collaboration to promote positive play and to resist negative effects of media culture on children's lives.

TRUCE
www.truceteachers.org

The Lion and Lamb Project works to reduce the marketing of violence to children through parent workshops, community events and outreach to government officials and leaders in the toy and entertainment industries. Resources include a *Parent Action Kit* ($15) and the manual *Toys for Peace: A How-to Guide for Organizing Violent Toy Trade-Ins* ($12).

The Lion and Lamb Project
(301) 654-3091
www.lionlamb.org

The Good Toy Group, made up of 58 independent toy retailers across the U.S., offers an online catalogue of high-quality, culturally-sensitive toys and a listing of nearly 90 stores.

The Good Toy Group
www.goodtoygroup.com

Through their Web site, traveling exhibits, how-to books, videos and CD-ROMs, WorldPlay introduces children from all over the world to each other's cultures through their handmade toys.

WorldPlay
www.worldplay.org

The National Television Violence Study, conducted between 1994 and 1997, is the largest ongoing study on the topic. Executive summaries and further information are available online.

The Center for Communication and Social Policy
University of California, Santa Barbara
www.ccsp.ucsb.edu/ntvs.htm

Who's Helen Keller?

Do children's books distort the truth of Helen Keller's life?

by Ruth Shagoury Hubbard

Illustrations by Jennifer Hewitson

The "Helen Keller story" that is stamped in our collective consciousness freezes her in childhood. We remember her most vividly at age seven when her teacher, Anne Sullivan, connected her to language through a magical moment at the water pump. We learned little of her life beyond her teen years, except that she worked on behalf of the handicapped.

But there is much more to Helen Keller's history than a brilliant deaf and blind woman who surmounted incredible obstacles. Helen Keller was a socialist who believed she was able to overcome many of the difficulties in her life because of her class privilege — a privilege not shared by most of her blind or deaf contemporaries. "I owed my success

partly to the advantages of my birth and environment," she said. " I have learned that the power to rise is not within the reach of everyone." More than an icon of American "can-do," Helen Keller was a tireless advocate of the poor and disenfranchised.

Helen Keller was someone who worked throughout her long life to achieve social change; she was an integral part of many important social movements in the 20th century. Her life story could serve as a fascinating example for children, but most picture books about Helen Keller are woefully silent about her life's work. It's time to start telling the truth about Helen Keller.

I first became interested in the activist work of Helen Keller a few years ago when I read James Loewen's *Lies My Teacher Told Me: Everything Your American History Textbook Got Wrong* (New Press, 1995). Loewen concludes that the way that Helen Keller's life story is turned into a "bland maxim" is lying by omission. When I turned to the many picture books written about her, I was discouraged to discover that books for young children retain that bland flavor, negating the power of her life work and the lessons she herself would hope people would take from it. Here is a woman who worked tirelessly as a radical advocate for the poor, but she is depicted as a kind of saintly role model for people with handicaps.

None of the children's books I reviewed mentioned that in 1909 Helen Keller became a socialist and a suffragist — causes that framed most of her writing.

The Nature of Courage

For the purposes of this investigation, I chose six picture books published from 1965 through 1997, which are the most readily available from bookstores and Web sites. Four of the six covers depict the famous moment at the well where Anne, her teacher, spells "water" into Helen's hand. This clichéd moment is the climax of each book, just as it is in the movies made on her life. To most people, Helen remains frozen in time in her childhood. According to these picture books, she is to be remembered for two things after she grew up: her "courage" and her "work with the blind and deaf."

Young Helen Keller, Woman of Courage, by Anne Benjamin, is typical. The first 29 pages bring us to Helen, age 12, who can read and write "and even speak." The last page, page 30, sums up the remaining 66 years of her life:

> When Helen was 20, she did something that many people thought was impossible. She went to college. Annie went with her to help her study.
>
> Helen spent her life helping blind and deaf people. She gave speeches and wrote many books. Helen Keller died on June 1, 1968. But people all over the world still remember her courageous, helpful life.

But courage to do what? The statements that sum up her "courageous accomplishments" are ambiguous and confusing. "She gave speeches and wrote books." What were they about? What did she do that was so courageous?

None of the children's books I reviewed mentioned that in 1909 Helen Keller became a socialist and a suffragist — causes that framed most of her writing. "I felt the tide of opportunity rising and longed for a voice that would be equal to the urge sweeping me out into the world," she wrote.

Nor do those books tell readers that Helen Keller's publishing options dwindled because she wrote passionately for women's voting rights and against war and corporate domination. In order to promote the social justice she believed in, she decided she would take lessons to improve her speaking voice so that she could publicly speak out against injustice. This was true courage. Even after three years of daily work, her voice was uneven and difficult to control. Though she was embarrassed by her speaking voice and terrified of the crowds, Helen Keller boldly went on the lecture circuit. She later wrote that it felt as if she were going to her own hanging: "Terror invaded my flesh, my mind froze, my heart stopped beating. I kept repeating, 'What shall I do? What shall I do to calm this tumult within me?'"

The picture books omit the courage that took Helen Keller farther away from her home to visit poverty-stricken neighborhoods in New York City, where she witnessed the horror of the crowded, unhealthy living conditions in tenement buildings. Outraged about the child labor

practices she encountered, she began to educate herself about efforts to organize unions and the violence that organizers and strikers faced. She wrote angry articles about the Ludlow Massacre, where, in an attempt to break a miners' strike, the Colorado National Guard shot 13 people and burned alive 11 children and two women. The Ludlow Mine belonged to the powerful millionaire John D. Rockefeller, and Rockefeller had paid the wages of the National Guard. When newspapers hesitated to publish her articles, Helen Keller spoke out publicly against Rockefeller: "I have followed, step by step, the developments in Colorado, where women and children have been ruthlessly slaughtered. Mr. Rockefeller is a monster of capitalism," she declared. "He gives charity in the same breath he permits the helpless workmen, their wives and children to be shot down."

Helen Keller was not afraid to ask tough, "impolite" questions: "Why in this land of great wealth is there great poverty?" she wrote in 1912. "Why [do] children toil in the mills while thousands of men cannot get work, why [do] women who do nothing have thousands of dollars a year to spend?"

This courage to speak out for what she believed in also is ignored in the picture book *Helen Keller: Courage in the Dark*, by Johanna Hurwitz. Here, her achievements are summed up on the final page:

> Helen's story has been retold over and over. She has been the subject of books, plays, films, and television programs. The United States Postal Service has dedicated a stamp to her. And an organization with her name works to help blind people.
>
> Helen Keller's life was filled with silence and darkness. But she had the courage and determination to light her days.

This is courage at its most passive. Notice that Helen herself is simply an icon — a "subject" of the media, the name behind an organization, and of course, best of all, an image on a stamp!

What a contrast to Helen Keller's own commitment to an active, productive life. When she wrote her autobiography in 1929, Keller declared, "I resolved that whatever role I did play in life, it would not be a passive one." Children don't learn that, in addition to promoting the rights of blind people, Helen Keller supported radical unions like the Industrial Workers of the World, or "Wobblies," becoming a Wobbly herself. Nor do they learn of her support for civil rights organizations like the NAACP and that W.E.B. DuBois printed news of her financial donations and the text of her letter of support in the organization's publication. "Ashamed in my very soul, I behold in my beloved south-land the tears of those oppressed, those who must bring up their sons and daughters in bondage to be servants, because others have their fields and vineyards, and on the side of the oppressor is power."

"Kings and Presidents"

The theme of passive courage is also at the center of *A Girl Named Helen Keller,* by Margo Lundell. But at least in Lundell's book, Helen is credited with some action. After focusing on

her childhood for 42 of the book's 44 pages, the author sums up Helen Keller's life with the following list:

> In her life, Helen wrote 5 books.
> She traveled many places.
> She met kings and presidents.
> She spoke to groups of people around the world.
> Most of the work she did was to help people who were blind or deaf.
> She was a warm and caring person.
> People loved her in return.
> The life of Helen Keller brought hope to many.

Helen Keller herself would probably be horrified by this vague and misleading representation of her life's work. She spoke to groups of people around the world — ah, but what did she say? Lundell doesn't hint that she said things like, "The future of America rests on the leaders of 80 million working men and women and their children. To end the war and capitalism, all you need to do is straighten up and fold your arms." Lundell is equally vague about the content of her books, neglecting to mention essays such as "How I Became a Socialist"or books such as *Out of the Dark: Essays, Letters, and Addresses on Physical and Social Vision* (1913).

Lundell's synopsis of Keller's accomplishments focuses on the famous people — "kings and presidents" — whom she met in her life. But at the core of her commitment was her work for political change with others, taking part in rallies, marches, meeting with friends to talk politics and to strategize. "I have never felt separated from my fellow men by the silent dark," she wrote. "Any sense of isolation is impossible since the doors of my heart were thrown open and the world came in."

She showed that connection to her fellow workers in her actions again and again. One fascinating example occurred in 1919, when Keller

starred in *Deliverance,* a silent movie about her life. Helen supported the Actors Equity Union's strike by refusing to cross the picket line to attend the opening — and by joining a protest march with the striking actors.

Like the other books I reviewed, *A Picture Book of Helen Keller,* by David Adler, focuses almost solely on her life before graduating from Radcliffe. The two important adult episodes Adler includes are her visits to blinded soldiers during World War II and her work for the American Foundation for the Blind. The book ignores her phenomenal and productive life work as a writer and social activist. On the last page of the book, Adler sums up her life work: "Helen Keller couldn't see or hear, but for more than eighty years, she had always been busy. She read and wrote books. She learned how to swim and even how to ride a bicycle. She did many things well. But most of all, Helen Keller brought hope and love to millions of handicapped people."

It's time to stop lying to children and go beyond Keller's childhood drama and share the remarkable story of her adult life and work.

Adler has space to note that Helen Keller learned to swim and ride a bicycle, but not to state that she helped found the American Civil Liberties Union or took on the medical establishment to change health care for infants. The inadequacy of the information in these books for children is staggering. Her life of hard work is reduced to the phrase "she had always been busy."

Children could also learn from Helen Keller's compassion and recommitment to pacifism after her visit to Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1948. Deeply moved by the people she met and what they described to her, she wrote that the experience "scorched a deep scar" in her soul and that she was more than ever determined to fight against "the demons of atomic warfare ... and for peace."

"A Mind of My Own"

"So long as I confine my activities to social service and the blind, they compliment me extravagantly, calling me 'archpriestess of the sightless,' 'wonder woman,' and 'a modern miracle,'" Helen wrote to her friend Robert LaFollette, an early pacifist who ran for president as a third-party Progressive candidate in 1924. "But when it comes to a discussion of poverty, and I maintain that it is the result of wrong economics — that the industrial system under which we live is at the root of much of the physical deafness and blindness in the world — that is a different matter!"

While she was alive, Helen Keller fought against the media's tendency to put her on a pedestal as a "model" sweet, good-natured, handicapped person who overcame adversity. The American Foundation for the Blind depended on her as spokesperson, but some of its leaders were horrified by her activism. As Robert Irwin, the executive director of the foundation, wrote to one of the trustees, "Helen Keller's habit of playing around with Communists and near-Communists has long been a source of embarrassment to her conservative friends. Please advise!"

In the years since her death, her lifelong work as a social justice activist has continued to be swept under the rug. As her biographer Dorothy Herrmann concludes: "Missing from her curriculum vitae are her militant socialism and the fact that she once had to be protected by six policemen from an admiring crowd of 2,000 people in New York after delivering a fiery speech protesting America's entry into World War I. The war, she told her audience, to thunderous applause, was a capitalist ploy to further enslave the workers. As in her lifetime, Helen Keller's public image remains one of an angelic, sexless, deaf-blind woman who is smelling a rose as she holds a Braille book open on her lap."

But why is her activism so consistently left out of her life stories? Stories such as this are perpetuated to fill a perceived need. The mythical Helen Keller creates a politically conservative moral lesson, one that stresses the ability of the individual to overcome personal adversity in a fair world. The lesson we are meant to learn seems to be: "Society is fine the way it is. Look at Helen Keller! Even though she was deaf and blind, she worked hard — with a smile on her face — and overcame her disabilities. She even met kings, queens and presidents, and is remembered for helping other handicapped people."

This demeaning view of Helen Keller celebrates her in a way that keeps her in her place. She never gets to be an adult; rather she is framed

as a grown-up child who overcame her handicap. Like other people with disabilities, Helen Keller deserves to be known for herself and not defined by her blindness or her deafness. She saw herself as a free and self-reliant person — as she wrote, "a human being with a mind of my own."

It's time to move beyond the distorted and dangerous Helen Keller myth, repeated in picture book after picture book. It's time to stop lying to children and go beyond Keller's childhood drama and share the remarkable story of her adult life and work. What finer lesson could children learn from her example than the rewards of working with others toward a vision of a more just world? •

Ruth Shagoury Hubbard (hubbard@lclark.edu) teaches language arts and literacy courses at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Ore. This article was adapted with permission from Rethinking Schools.

IN FOCUS

Left Out

By Ruth Shagoury Hubbard

David Adler's best-selling *A Picture Book of Helen Keller* includes a chronology typical of the dates that other authors include about Helen Keller's life:

1880 Born on June 27 in Tuscumbia, Ala.

1882 As a result of illness, became deaf and blind.

1887 Met Anne Sullivan.

1900 Entered Radcliffe College.

1924 Began to work for the American Federation for the Blind.

1936 Anne Sullivan died on October 20.

1946 Visited injured soldiers.

1964 Received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from President Lyndon Johnson.

1968 Died on June 1.

There are a few dates I would add to this chronology that highlight her lifelong commitment to social justice:

1903 *The Story of My Life is published* — first in a series of articles in *The Ladies' Home Journal*, and then as a book.

1907 Helen writes a groundbreaking article for The Ladies' Home Journal in an effort to prevent blindness among infants caused by the mother's venereal disease. (She rallies forces to convince the medical establishment to treat children's eyes at birth with a cleansing solution as a regular procedure.)

1908 Publication of *The World I Live In*.

1909 Becomes a socialist and a suffragist.

1912 Publicly speaks out in favor of birth control, and in support of Margaret Sanger's work.

1914 Demonstrates with the Woman's Peace Party to call for peace in Europe; after the demonstration, she makes an impassioned speech for pacifism and socialism in crowded Carnegie Hall.

1915 Writes articles publicly denouncing Rockefeller as a "monster of Capitalism," responsible for the Ludlow Massacre (at his coal mine in Ludlow, Colorado) where men, women and children were killed in a bloody confrontation between strikers and the militia.

1916 Openly supports the Industrial Workers of the World.

1917 Donates money to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) and writes a supportive article in the *NAACP Journal*.

1918 Helps found the American Civil Liberties Union to fight for freedom of speech.

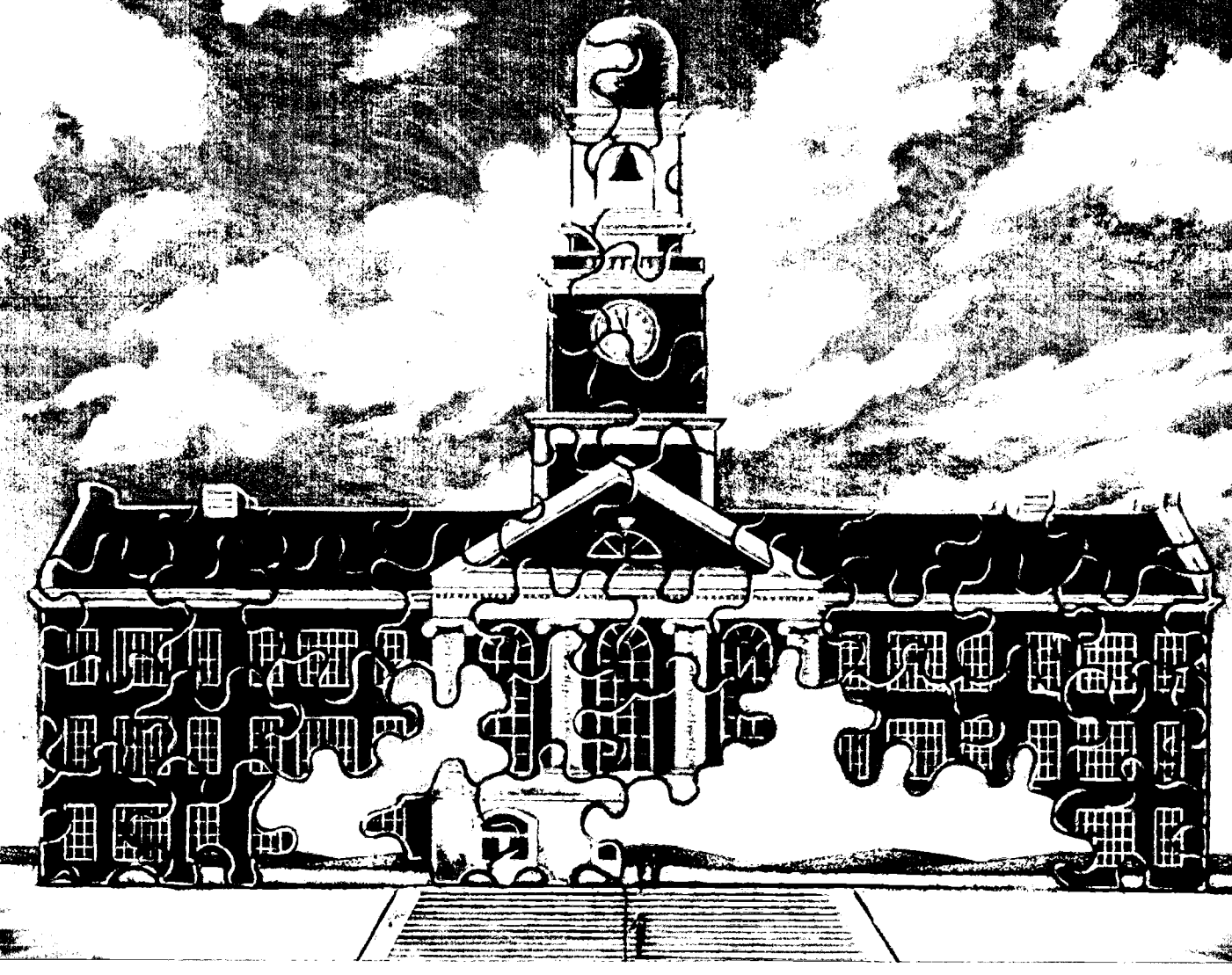
1919 Stars in *Deliverance*, a silent movie about her life; supports Actors Equity Union's strike by refusing to cross the picket line to attend the opening.

1924 Campaigns for Robert LaFollette, a Progressive running for president as a third-party candidate.

1929 Publication of *Midstream: My Later Life*.

1948 Visits "the black silent hole" that had once been Hiroshima and Nagasaki and recommits herself to the anti-war movement.

1961 Suffers first stroke; retires from public life.



BY JOE PARSONS ILLUSTRATION BY JIM OSBOURNE

Margins of Error

The needs of limited English proficiency students put special education assessment to the test

Tony Guisasola starts his bus route before daylight in Ellijay, a town of 1,600 in the wooded mountains of north Georgia. Later in the day, he teaches math and science to homebound middle school children. In addition to his transportation and teaching duties, he administers and interprets screening tests for special education services in Ellijay schools.

The son of a Cuban-born North Carolinian, Guisasola also frequently serves as a Spanish-language interpreter for teachers, students and parents. But the special education screening tests he administers are in English only, which yields unreliable results for students whose English is limited.

"I speak fluent Spanish," Guisasola says, "but I don't have the instruments for assessing the needs of Spanish-speaking students. Informal translations don't work. My wife, Becky, is an ESL [English as a Second Language] teacher. It breaks our hearts to see these children not getting the level of services they deserve." If a Spanish-speaking student requires psychological evaluation, a specialist must be brought in from

Atlanta, at a cost of several hundred dollars. Ellijay's budget constraints weigh heavily against such consultations, he says.

Tony and Becky's combination of responsibilities gives them a unique perspective on a problem that many observers say is growing at an alarming rate across the United States: inadequate coordination between special education and English-language support services.

Language-minority students are the fastest-growing population in U.S. public schools. During the 1990s, their numbers rose from 8 million to 15 million. These include new immigrant students as well as students from Native American and indigenous backgrounds.

"It breaks our hearts to see these children not getting the level of services they deserve."

—Tony Guisasola, on the unreliability of assessments for Spanish-speaking students

Research shows that the distribution of "extremely bright," "average" and "cognitively limited" individuals is similar across cultural segments of the population. Accordingly, about 12 percent of language-minority students may be expected to have learning or emotional disabilities.

Education researchers have long recognized that students with limited English proficiency (LEP) are disproportionately represented in special education programs.

But careful scrutiny tells a more complicated story for language-minority students. Often they are overrepresented in some special education programs and underrepresented in others.

In a number of high-profile cases, misdiagnosis of bilingual students for special education has led to costly litigation and improper education for students. In *Diana v. California State Board of Education,* for example, a Spanish-speaking student in Monterey County, Calif., had been placed in a class for mildly mentally retarded students because she had scored low on an IQ test given to her in English. The court ruled that Spanish-speaking children should be retested in their native language to avoid errors in placement.

As a result, many school districts have become extraordinarily sensitive to charges of over-identification — sensitive enough, in some cases, to err in the opposite direction. As a result, language minority students with very real special education needs are being left behind.

Because the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) guarantees children in the United States the right to any necessary special educational services in the least restrictive environment possible, state and local education officials are required to consider cultural and linguistic factors when developing policies and procedures for special education assessment. But a host of issues make this mandate difficult for many districts to fulfill, especially in rural areas or small towns like Ellijay.

Judy Smith-Davis, of Vanderbilt University's Alliance Project — which works with minority institutions of higher education to increase special education personnel from historically underrepresented populations — points to the changing nature of immigration as an underlying problem. Nearly 10 percent of the U.S. population is now immigrants, and 9 million of them are children. In the past, says Smith-Davis, new immigrants settled first in urban areas, where school resources existed for new immigrant students. Today, however, food processing and agricultural industries draw many immigrant families to scattered, rural areas where special educational resources for language minorities are lacking.

Ellijay, for example, has attracted scores of Mexican and Central American families in recent

years. Ellijay schools are now grappling with an unprecedented challenge: how to educate students from diverse cultures, many of whom do not speak English when they arrive.

Across the country, meeting the needs of LEP students is made more complex by economic conditions. Census Bureau statistics show that the children of immigrants are significantly poorer than the children of native-born Americans. Close to 30 percent of immigrant children live in poverty versus 16 percent of the children of native-born Americans.

Ohio State University's Suha Al-Hassan and Ralph Gardner note that this poverty compounds other factors that can contribute to the need for special education services. Many immigrant parents work in jobs that do not provide family health insurance, so prenatal and neonatal care may be deficient or altogether absent. Even in states that provide screenings for educational disabilities to *all* children, recent immigrants may be unaware that they are entitled to this service. Furthermore, poverty and the emotional/physical trauma that may have prompted a family to seek refuge in the United States in the first place may affect a child's special educational needs.

IN FOCUS

Assessing language proficiency

In some school districts, educators differentiate between two levels of language acquisition:

BICS: Basic Interpersonal Conversational Skills

Vocabulary: Tangible objects, nouns and verbs, such as, "Open your red math book."

Years to acquire: 1 to 3

Characteristics: Student is able to speak English very well on a conversational level.

What's missing: Student is unable to understand academic terms, has difficulty reading and writing and has not yet developed the cognitive skills necessary to succeed in the regular classroom.

CALP: Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

Vocabulary: Intangible concepts, abstract vocabulary, language/jargon of academic subjects, such as, "How does pollution harm the environment?"

Years to acquire: 5 to 7

Characteristics: Student is able to read, write and perform academically on a level with peers.

Because many students at the BICS stage sound as if they totally understand English, accurate assessment is more difficult than it is at the CALP level. See our Web exclusive (p. 37) for information about a pre-referral process that helps address this issue.

– Adapted from Colorado Springs School District 11's ESL Inquiry Kit, unit on Special Education (see Web exclusive).

Creative Puzzlers

The Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC) is a Virginia-based organization that monitors administration of special education services and trains parents of special-needs children to be their own best advocates. In a 2000-2001 project aiming to help Latino families in Virginia negotiate the winding special education referral process, PEATC's Latino Outreach Specialists made nearly 400 contacts and served a total of 64 families.

"As word has spread about our services," says executive director Cherie Takemoto, "the demand keeps increasing." PEATC has also branched out to work with parents in Maryland and conducted workshops in Illinois, Indiana and Kentucky.

The PEATC initiative revealed disturbing patterns, says Takemoto. Schools sometimes shy away from referring LEP students for "mild disabilities" such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder [ADHD] or learning disabilities [LD], she explains. But when students with such disabilities do not receive special education services, they fall further behind. Additional problems

set in, such as failure to do homework, truancy, discipline issues, suspension and even expulsion. "When the schools finally take action," says Takemoto, "too often it is to label the child as having an emotional disability."

This leads, she finds, to a greater number of LEP students being diagnosed for mild mental retardation and emotional disability. The PEATC staff observed no corresponding overrepresentation for LD and ADHD for language-minority students.

A 2002 study by the Harvard Civil Rights Project *(see Resources)* identified a set of interacting factors that contribute to disproportionate numbers of LEP students in special education programs. From the outset, unconscious biases can affect decisions about "whom to test, what test to use, when to use alternative tests, how to interpret student responses, and what weight to give results from specific tests." While this bias does not reflect the efforts of many teachers who go to bat for LEP students, examples have also shown how results of correctly or incorrectly administered tests and the presence or absence of advocates can make or break a student's career.

There are as yet no standardized instruments or federal or state criteria to assess special needs of LEP students.

With a few exceptions, schools of education are not training future teachers in both special education *and* ESL instruction. Given the "paucity" of dual training, Nancy Cloud of Rhode Island College notes in a study that professionals are left to find their own training opportunities at conferences and workshops and, from these haphazard events, must piece together the elements that formulate appropriate practice.

At George Mason University in Virginia, however, Eva Thorp and her colleagues are charting a new path for teacher preparation that addresses the complex needs of culturally, linguistically and ability-diverse young children and their families. The Unified Transformative Early Education Model (UTEEM), which Thorp co-directs, offers teachers multiple licensure in early childhood education, early childhood special education, ESL and multicultural education.

The two-year graduate-level program fully integrates coursework in language development, assessment of culturally diverse student populations, family assessment and curriculum development for diverse learners. A series of four internships in daycare, pre-school and school settings prepares future teachers to know the peoples and cultures in their community. Going shopping with families or gathering family stories (as opposed to a clinical checklist) help graduates understand how families make deci-

RESOURCES

"Why Don't They Learn English?" is a short, research-based volume that aims to clarify public perception on immigrant language and English-language learning issues.

Teachers College Press
www.teacherscollegepress.com
(800) 575-6566

Nationally, Black children are nearly two to three times more likely to be identified as emotionally disturbed or mentally retarded than White students. These findings and more are described in Gary Orfield and Daniel Losen's book *Racial Inequity in Special Education* ($28.95).

Harvard Education Publishing Group
www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/books.php
(800) 513-0763

The Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP), part of the U.S. Department of Education, disseminates federal information on early intervention and the education of children and youth with disabilities. It administers the IDEA, provides grants and technical assistance to state agencies, higher education institutions and the private sector to support research, personnel development and parent-training and information centers.

www.ed.gov/offices/OSERS/OSEP/index.html
(202) 205-5507

The Alliance Project, based in Vanderbilt University, works with minority institutions of higher education to increase special education personnel from historically underrepresented ethnic minorities.

The Alliance Project
www.alliance2k.org
(800) 831-6134
alliance@vanderbilt.edu

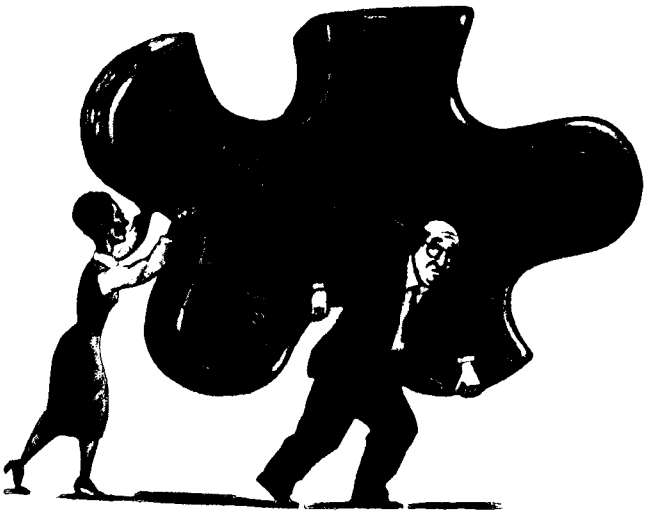
The Virginia-based Parent Educational Advocacy Training Center (PEATC) assists the families of children with disabilities through education, information and training. PEATC provides technical assistance and helps build parent-professional partnerships.

PEATC
(703) 923-0010
E-mail: partners@peatc.org

sions, what their hopes and priorities are.

For instance, the better teachers understand their students' various language exposure, students' level of proficiency in the primary language and in English, and their prior education experience, the more equipped are they to distinguish between English language skill delay and language disability.

Bringing parents into the process is key to effective service. But that can be challenging because of the power differentials that exist between parents and school authorities, especially if parents are recent immigrants or lack formal education. Recent immigrants may not be aware of their children's rights. Further, undocumented parents may be reluctant to step forward and demand special education services for their children.



Professionals are left to find their own training opportunities at conferences and workshops and, from these haphazard events, must piece together the elements that formulate appropriate practice.

Parents may not fully understand the nature of a child's disability and the corresponding special educational needs. Ana Avenzini, PEATC's outreach specialist, explains, "For many in the Latino community, if they have a child with a disability in their own country, they receive no assistance. Under this frame of reference, they think the child will be 'put out' of school."

Andrea Ghetzler, a special education teacher and administrator from Skokie, Ill., points out that some cultures are more accepting of developmental disabilities than others. "In a lot of cultures," she says, "there is no such thing as special education, ... it's thought of as 'mental retardation.'" If a student is thought to require special education services, Ghetzler's first challenge is sometimes to persuade parents to consent to assessment. In some cases, parents fear that their child will be institutionalized and prefer to ignore or hide the problem.

A significant part of the educator's or advocate's job, then, consists of explaining the nature of special education to parents and bridging cultural differences regarding disabilities. It is a process that requires building trust over time.

It takes a village — educators, school support personnel such as psychologists and speech/language therapists, policy-makers and parents working together — to fine-tune special education and English-language support services for LEP students.

It means developing appropriate assessment instruments, consistent guidelines and integrative teacher training that take into account students' linguistic, cultural diversity as well as their general cognitive and learning development.

It takes commitment and resources — no less — so that no student would be mislabeled or fall through the cracks. •

Joe Parsons is an editor and writer from Illinois.

WEB EXCLUSIVE

Log onto our Web site to view an extensive package on bilingual special education that includes:

- **Professional development tools;**
- **Profiles of urban and suburban school districts that face similar challenges;**
- **Model classroom practices;**
- **Current research relating to assessments, cultural diversity and parental involvement; and**
- **Additional resources.**

Visit magazine issue #24 at www.teachingtolerance.org/magazine; click on "Margins of Error."

Adoptive families seek to transform classroom strategies

Out of the Shadows

by Elizabeth Hunt • illustration by PJ Loughran

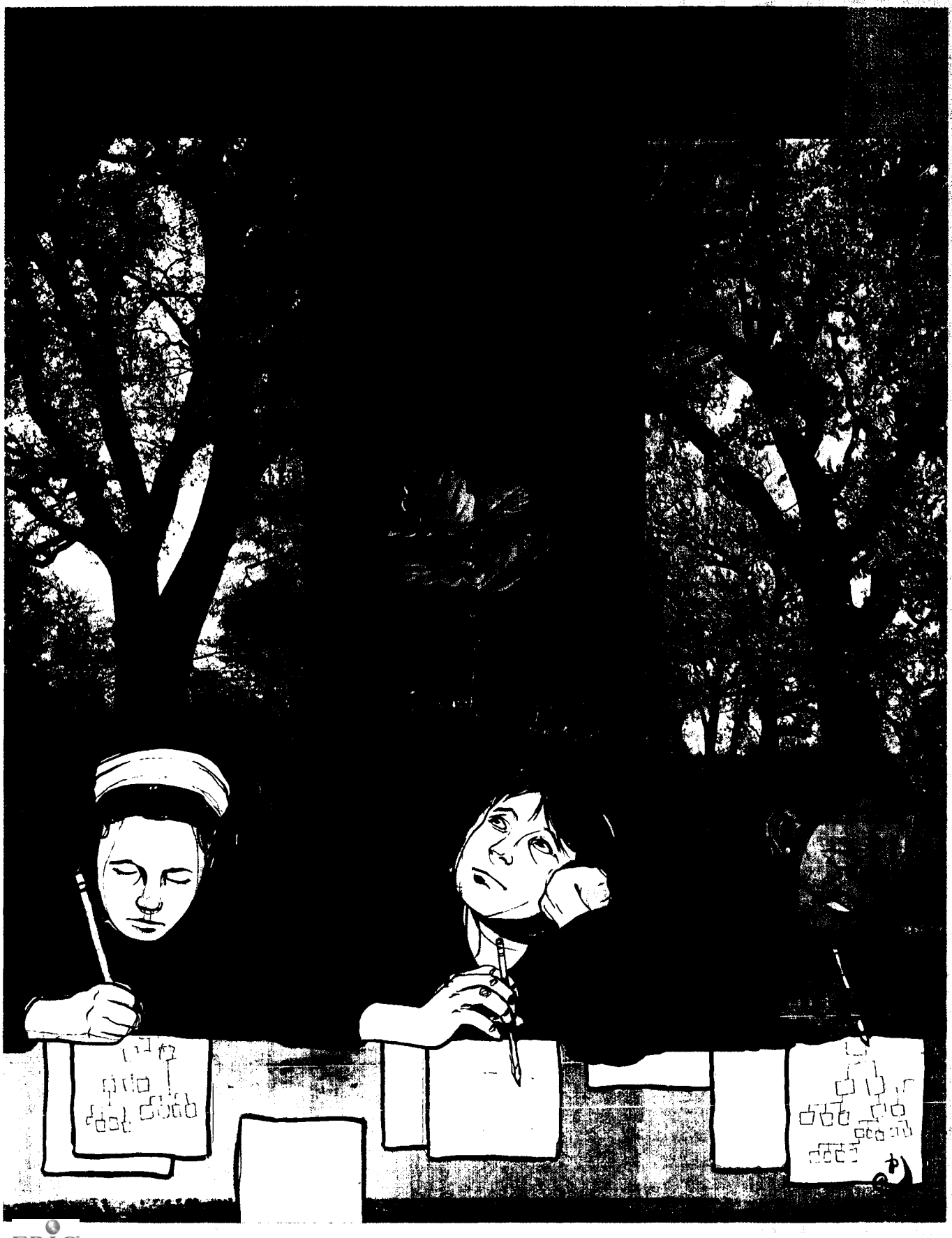
In the earliest pictures Jill Lampman has of her older daughter, Elena's hair is short and choppy. There are dark circles under her eyes. When Elena's kindergarten teacher sent home her first assignment — to bring in a baby photo for the bulletin board — Jill knew she had to tell the teacher her child's story. Elena had spent her first three years in a Romanian orphanage. "The first pictures I have of her," Jill says, "are not something I would want to share."

For families like the Lampmans of Vancouver, Wash., speaking up about adoption is not only a matter of pride, it is also often a necessity. Too frequently, say many, those most closely involved with adoption — adoptees, adoptive parents and birth parents — must debunk misconceptions and false assumptions.

It's not that people generally view adoption negatively. In fact, according to a 2002 study by the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption, almost two-thirds of Americans view adoption "very favorably," a figure that has risen steadily in recent years. "Now adoption is seen as cause for celebration," says executive director Rita Soronen. But, experts and advocates note, the "coming out" of adoptive families in recent years has not yet produced a corresponding increase in public understanding of adoption issues. Because adoptive children face some different developmental concerns than their non-adoptive peers, and these concerns affect what happens in the classroom, educators are among the people for whom an accurate understanding of adoption is most important.

In particular, teachers need to understand that certain lessons and assignments can affect adoptive and non-adoptive children very differently.

"I hear this story all the time," says Adam Pertman of the Evan B. Donald-



son Adoption Institute in New York. "A teacher gives a family tree assignment, and she tries to be sensitive, telling Johnny, who was adopted, 'You can choose who you want to put in your family tree.' But guess what? Johnny feels faced with divided loyalties — he has to say who his 'real' family is. And his little brain is bursting. He just can't do it."

For Josh Barrett, a 19-year-old adoptee from Nashville, Ind., the elementary and middle school years were the most difficult. Adopted from foster care as a 7-year-old, Josh remembers "lots of assignments I couldn't do — things like asking my grandparents for information about our family heritage or bringing a baby picture for show-and-tell. And it wasn't just that I couldn't do them. I couldn't really explain why, either, without going into a lot of history that I didn't want to go into."

Nor are the obvious assignments — such as family trees and genetic pedigrees, in which students trace a heritable trait through members of their family — the only ones that cause problems. Teachers may unknowingly broach a wide range of subjects in ways that can be alienating to students who were adopted. "In high school health class, there may be no mention of adoption as a way to plan families," says Pat Johnston, who was an Indiana high school teacher before becoming an adoption educator and publisher. "Or adoption may be presented as a negative outcome. In psychology class, for example, adoption may come up as a problem situation."

Johnston says that her own children, whom she adopted, often "found themselves steaming quietly or placed in the position of having to defend their family and how it was formed."

And Josh Barrett, whose pre-adoption history includes being abused, says the topic of child abuse should be handled with care as well. "I heard it in psych class and in health class all the time: 'Kids who are abused grow up to abuse their own kids,' as though it was a given. For a long time I thought I would grow up to be an abuser. It wasn't until I was halfway through high school that I figured out that I had a choice in the matter."

Knowledge and understanding are keys to creating an atmosphere of inclusion for adoptive students. Being aware that adoptive students

IN FOCUS

Respectful Adoption Language

Instead of: Real mother/father/parents or natural mother
Use: Birth mother/father/parents
"Adoptive children have different people in their lives who can genuinely be seen as real parents in different ways," says adoption educator Patricia Irwin Johnston, "so it's important to be specific."

Instead of: Adoptive mother/father/parents
Use: Mother or mom/father or dad/parents
Unless the adoptive aspect is important, there's no need to attach a qualifier to a parent's title.

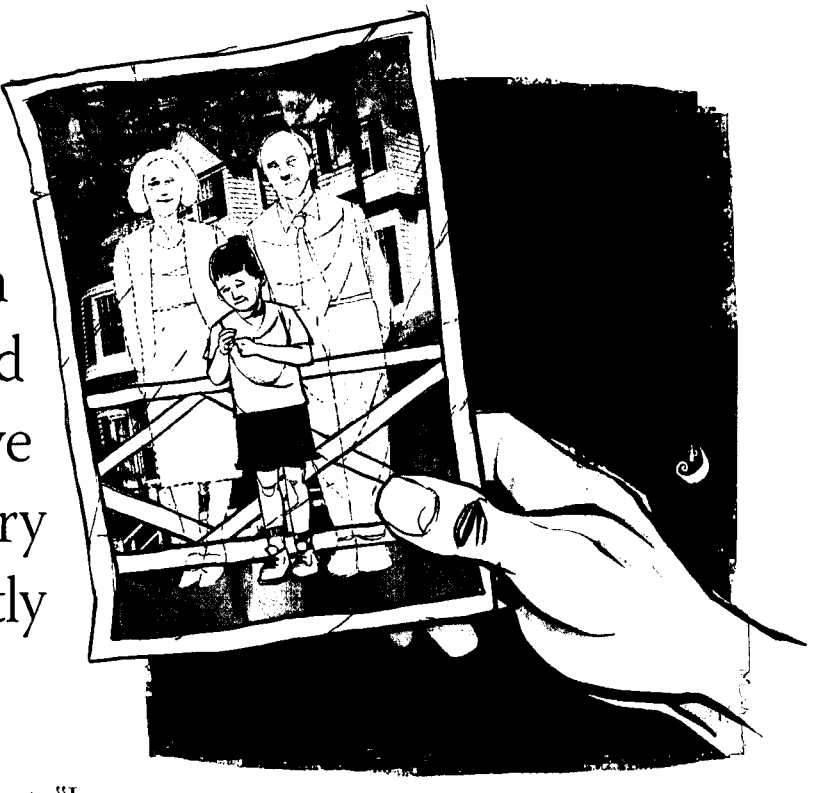
Instead of: Own child
Use: Birth child
Adoptive parents see their children as fully their own.

Instead of: Adopted child
Use: Child
The media in particular have a strong tendency to identify family members as adoptive, even when it has no relevance to a story. When it is relevant, "adoptive child" or "child who was adopted" are preferable to "adopted child."

Instead of: "Is adopted"
Use: "Was adopted"
When it is relevant to note that a person joined his or her family by adoption, remember that adoption is a one-time, legal event, not an ongoing condition or characteristic.

Avoid "Adopt-an-Anything"
Class projects that involve "adopting" a zoo animal, stretch of highway, 'grandparent,' or anything else can also create confusion and conflict for adoptive children. It belittles adoption to suggest that picking up trash along a stretch of highway is in any way related to the lifelong bonds between parent and child.

Teachers need to understand that certain lessons can affect adoptive and non-adoptive children very differently



may well be hurt by a classmate's comment, "I don't see how anyone could 'abandon' a baby for someone else to raise," can prompt a teacher to provide a fuller, more realistic picture of adoption as a responsible and loving option.

Similarly, choice is often the key to creating assignments that work well for all children regardless of how they joined their families. A high school genetic pedigree assignment can offer students the choice of tracing a trait through any group of genetically related people — or examining the heritable traits of plants or animals. An autobiography assignment, potentially difficult for students who have periods in their life about which they may not wish to talk, can be transformed by allowing students to focus on a particular chapter of their life.

And that tough old chestnut, the family tree — which, after all, has never lent itself well to the rich and complex way in which people build their families — can give way to "Circles of Caring" for younger students and, for middle and high school students, family circles or genograms, both of which are more flexible ways of tracing family relationships.

It's important, though, that the same assignment choices are offered to all students, says adoptive mother Jill Lampman. "If you grant exceptions to just one or two adopted students, that singles them out. Assignments should work for everyone."

A Window on Family Diversity

Creating a classroom that includes adoptive and non-adoptive students equally may be the most powerful reason for teachers to become more educated about adoption issues. But what they learn will also serve them well in working with other kinds of family diversity.

"Adoption is a wonderful prism through which to view American families today, because adoptive families come in all kinds," says Adam Pertman. "Single-parent, gay and lesbian, multi-ethnic, blended. In fact, there's only one kind of family that adoptive families are not: the so-called typical family with two parents and their two offspring."

The fact that adoption's history has been veiled in secrecy, and that adoptions go through both public and private channels, has meant that reliable adoption statistics have never been very easy to come by, a fact that is only now starting to change. But available information verifies the impression that adoptive families are often diverse in many other ways. Older parents, into their fifties and beyond, for example, may choose adoption as a way to start first or second families, and custodial grandparents or other relatives sometimes also adopt the children they care for, giving them dual roles in children's lives.

Adoptive families are often multiracial, and

"Adoption is a wonderful prism through which to view American families today, because adoptive families come in all kinds."

— ADAM PERTMAN, EVAN B. DONALDSON ADOPTION INSTITUTE

the rate of transracial adoption (in which adoptive parents and children are of different races) has doubled in recent years, from less than 8 percent of all U.S. adoptions in 1987 to more than 15 percent by 2000.

International adoption has seen enormous growth in the same period, from just over 8,000 U.S. adoptions from abroad in 1989 to more than 20,000 in 2002. International adoption is transracial in more than half of the cases; in almost every case, it involves blending family members of different cultures.

Single-parent adoption is on the rise as well. Accounting for one-third of all adoptions in 2000, single-parent adoptions are estimated to have more than tripled since the 1980s. They also provide one of the only measures — and certainly an imperfect one — of gay and lesbian adoption, also widely believed to have increased substantially in the last 15 years. "With the growing demographic of single-parent adoptions, there's an assumption that many gay and lesbian adoptions are included in that number," says Rita Soronen of the Dave Thomas Foundation.

National data from the mid-1990s reveal that anywhere from 1 million to 9 million U.S. children have at least one gay parent, figures that many believe to be conservative. But within these numbers, the percentage of children who were adopted by one or both gay parents is unknown.

Adoptive parents have tended to be White and in the middle or upper socioeconomic classes, and that remains true. But increasing numbers of African American and Latino parents are using adoption to build families as well. Adoptions from foster care have risen, and these are often initiated by Black and Latino parents, as well as by parents who are not affluent. And stepchild adoptions are common across racial groups and socioeconomic classes.

The many different kinds of family diversity represented in adoption give adoptive families layers of additional richness and complexity, but these families may still have different needs and concerns than their non-adoptive counterparts.

Ruth-Arlene Howe, a law professor at Boston College who has written extensively on transracial adoption, says that parents who form families in this way must also form a new identity for their family — and themselves. When White parents adopt Black children, she says, "They must realize that they are no longer a 'White family.'

They need to consciously reconstruct their social circles, their activities, even where they live to acknowledge that fact."

Teachers can help. For example, says Howe, in the case of transracial adoption, teachers can become allies and support systems for students growing up in a culture other than the one into which they were born. "They need to think, for instance, about what kinds of family pictures they put on the wall, to consider whether children will look at those pictures and be able to see themselves there," she says.

Developmental Differences

Understanding children's individual needs and life histories is also important when adoptees reach different stages in dealing with their loss and identity. In elementary school, adoptive children will often experience their first grief over losing birth parents and will begin to understand what adoption is, making them sensitive to negative portrayals of adoption, says Pertman. "Children at this age don't think abstractly. They think concretely. And so when they see a movie in which everyone is laughing at the little bear who was adopted, they see who they are as something to be laughed at."

In adolescence, adoptees may experience the tugs and pulls associated with separation into adulthood and thus may become more interested in meeting their birth parents. Transracially adopted teens may wrestle more with their sense of racial identity.

For children who have been in foster care, the teen years may mark a period of testing limits and pulling back from relationships, says Rita Soronen. It's important to realize that what might seem like problem behavior in a nonadoptive child can be "understandable, in light of these kids' backgrounds," she adds. "Why would they open up, why would they trust adults, when every relationship they have ever had has been pulled away from them?"

Jenny Pettenger says that school-based adoptee support groups could be helpful, not only by offering adoptees a place to talk and "vent" but also by serving an educational function for schools.

Adoption advocate Adam Pertman believes it is only a matter of time before adoption issues are a regular part of an educator's professional development. "Adoption is a train headed in only one direction," he says. "And so is educating people about adoption. I know we'll be there when we all understand that adoption is a fine, legitimate, equal way of forming families." •

Elizabeth Hunt, Ph.D., is a freelance writer and adoptive mother who lives in South Bend, Ind.

RESOURCES

Adoption and the Schools: Resources for Parents and Teachers ($25) is a well-organized, 260-page guide with in-depth information on creating bias-free assignments, effective communication about adoption issues and more.

Families Adopting in Response (FAIR)
(650) 856-3513
www.fairfamilies.org

An Educator's Guide to Adoption ($7.75) is a 22-page booklet offering an introduction to adoption issues in the classroom, as well as resources for teaching about adoption.

Institute for Adoption Information
www.adoptioninformation institute.org

PACT's *Multicultural Book-Source,* Second Edition, ($23.95) is a comprehensive bibliography of more than 1,200 books related to race, adoption and family diversity.

PACT: An Adoption Alliance
(510) 243-9460
www.pactadopt.org/ booksource

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption offers professional resources including posters, videos and a guidebook on adoption. The foundation focuses on foster-care adoptions.

The Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption
(800) ASK-DFTA
www.davethomas foundationforadoption.org

The Learning Center — an online well from the National Adoption Center — focuses on special-needs children and children from minority cultures. It includes an online adoption course ($100).

(800) TO-ADOPT
www.adoptnet.org

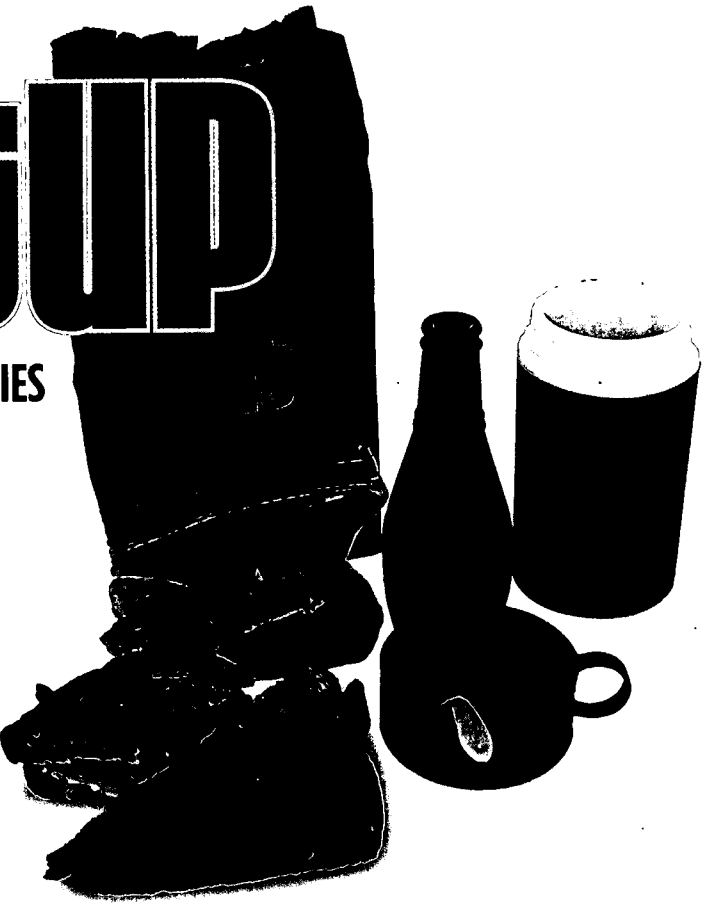
The Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute offers an online resource guide for educators. It includes teachers' manuals, relevant journal articles and a bibliography.

(212) 269-5080
www.adoptioninstitute.org /proed/educators.html

mix it up

STUDENTS BRIDGE SOCIAL BOUNDARIES ON MIX IT UP AT LUNCH DAY

by Dana Williams



"All right, let's mix it up," chanted 17-year-old CJ on his way to the cafeteria at Booker T. Washington Magnet High School (BTW) in Montgomery, Ala.

The energetic senior smiled as he strutted past two teachers who were handing out stickers in honor of the first national Mix It Up at Lunch Day.

Once inside, CJ found the cafeteria more like musical chairs than lunch, as he joined classmates hopping from table to table — meeting, greeting and eating. That's exactly what the day was supposed to be.

In observance of Mix It Up at Lunch Day last Fall, students like CJ in more than 3,000 schools accepted the challenge to bridge social barriers by sitting somewhere new, with someone new, in their cafeterias.

"This is awesome," said 17-year-old Brittany, who dubbed herself the "Mix It Up Poster Child" for BTW. "I've been telling everyone in all of my classes about the Day for weeks now. I'm just so glad to see this many people participating."

In addition to the increased noise level, Brittany said the cafeteria took on a new look on Mix Day. "Any other day, people would be sitting with other people who look exactly like them," she said. "I hope today will be the first step in the right direction. A chance for people to see things they have in common with people they might not normally talk to or sit with."

Aryne, a junior who mixed it up by sitting

Youth organizers at Bear Creek High School in Stockton, Calif., used decks of cards to shuffle up the 2,500 members of the student body.

At the Barringer Academic Center in Charlotte, N.C., students in grades K-5 broke out of their homeroom "rut," eating their lunches in different rooms, which were designated by birth months.

with classmates sharing her birth month, admitted some people were at first reluctant.

"It's all about who your friends are" she said matter of factly. "People like to sit with people they know."

On most days, Aryne says the segregation is pretty easy to see. "Race is the most obvious, of course," she said. "But you can see it by grade and other things, too. Seniors sit with the seniors; football players sit with football players."

'Let's go mix it up'

Just a few miles from BTW, students at Loveless Academic Magnet Program (LAMP), a school nationally recognized for its stringent college preparatory curriculum, also were mixing it up.

As students prepared to break for the first lunch period, LAMP Principal Veverly Arrington announced over the intercom that faculty and students were to sit at the tables divided by birth month.

"We want every student participating," Arrington announced. "Now, let's go mix it up."

Within minutes, 200 students filed into the lunchroom, scrambling to find the table with the month of their birthdays.

Kim, a 17-year-old junior, said LAMP students already mix it up most days.

"Our school is pretty different than most, I guess. There is not that much segregation here,"

Why Mix It Up?

Last Fall, Teaching Tolerance and Tolerance.org surveyed students across the country. Here's what they said about social boundaries in their schools.

A MAJORITY said their schools are "quick to put people into categories"

ONE THIRD of students said it was hard to make friends with people in different groups

FORTY PERCENT admitted that they had been part of a group that had rejected someone

Which boundaries are the hardest to cross?

Students' top answers:

1. Personal appearance
2. Athletic achievement
3. Style
4. Race
5. Academic achievement

Where do students see the boundaries most clearly?

1. Cafeteria
2. Classroom
3. Bus
4. Recreational activities
5. After-school clubs

Want to conduct the survey in your school? Find the survey in our free classroom activity booklets at www.mixitup.org/teachers.

she said. "We're all here for the same purpose – to learn – and we really do get to know each other because we all have to study so hard together."

Arrington agreed that LAMP students are probably less divided by the social boundaries that exist at other schools. Still, she welcomed Mix It Up.

"Even though there are few divisions here, as human beings, we are all creatures of habit. We like to sit in the same pew at church and sit at the same table at lunch," she said. "It's good to break out of that comfort zone when you can."

Jerry, a 16-year-old sophomore, said he looks forward to breaking out of his comfort zone more often.

"This is cool. Sitting with the same people everyday gets boring. It's nice to move around some and make new friends," he said. "I think we should do it every month." •

Dana Williams is a staff writer with Tolerance.org.

In Sacramento, students at Natamos Park Elementary and Discovery High – longtime pen pals – decided that Mix Day was the perfect opportunity to meet their paper friends in person.

An Unstoppable Energy

by Marcie Frederickson

The day after Mix It Up at Lunch Day, it took me longer than usual to get my morning coffee – students kept stopping me in the halls commenting on the previous day's activities:

"I said hi to at least 20 new people yesterday, and I've decided to do it again today."

"I'm keeping my sticker on my ID for the rest of the year."

And, "When's the next Mix It Up? That was great!"

All day, I heard similar positive comments from students. It was clear that the members of Students Against Prejudice (SAP) had successfully promoted the day of breaking boundaries and bringing people together.

When SAP students first heard about Mix It Up at Lunch Day, they became determined to promote a day that would bring different groups together, no matter how small the impact.

In a school the size of Wichita (Kas.) East High School, bringing people together and getting the word out about events can be tedious. SAP decided to publicize the day through posters and announcements.

At every corner in the massive school building there seemed to be a poster. Then, on Mix Day, more than 25 students gathered to distribute Mix stickers encouraging students to meet someone new.

The concept sounded too easy. I must admit I was skeptical, but an amazing event transpired. The dynamic SAP members, making up a mere 1 percent of the student population, spread an unstoppable energy throughout the school by using stickers to bridge gaps.

Students chanted "Mix it up!" as they laughed and slapped hands with strangers.

At the end of lunch, as students were trickling into classrooms, the sea of stickers was unbelievable. Several teachers commented that it appeared as if each and every single student in the building had been touched.

The small group of SAP students had accomplished their goal and had experienced positive feedback from students they may never have considered interacting with before.

And that's what we can hope for – for young people to think, accept, be tolerant and occasionally Mix It Up.

Read school counselor Marcie Frederickson's full essay at www.mixitup.org/teachers

How to Mix It Up at Lunch

ORGANIZE Reach out to colleagues, extracurricular clubs, sports teams and other school groups. Do you serve as the adviser to the French club? The basketball team? The student government association? Pull people together.

PUBLICIZE Log onto www.mixitup.org to download posters, fliers, T-shirt decals, stickers, Mix "raps" for intercom announcements and much more.

TEACH Log onto www.mixitup.org/teachers to access activity booklets appropriate for early, middle and upper grades.

PLAN How are you going to do "the Day?" Here are five ways to mix up lunchroom seating:
1. Use decks of cards to mix people up.
2. Number several tables and draw your seat assignment from a hat.
3. Draw colored candies out of a bag and sit with the matching tablecloth.
4. Find a table where you don't know more than two people.
5. Give each person a "ticket" that matches the color tag on a chair.

ACT It's November 18th, and students are sitting at tables staring at a bunch of people they don't know. Here are five ideas to jump-start conversations.
1. What's the last CD you bought?
2. Imagine you rule the world. What's the first law you'd make?
3. What's the craziest thing you ever did in public?
4. You're signing autographs. What are you famous for?
5. You're the principal. What's the first class you drop — and what class do you add?

Start a Mix It Up Dialogue Group

Want to dig deeper into the social boundaries at your school?

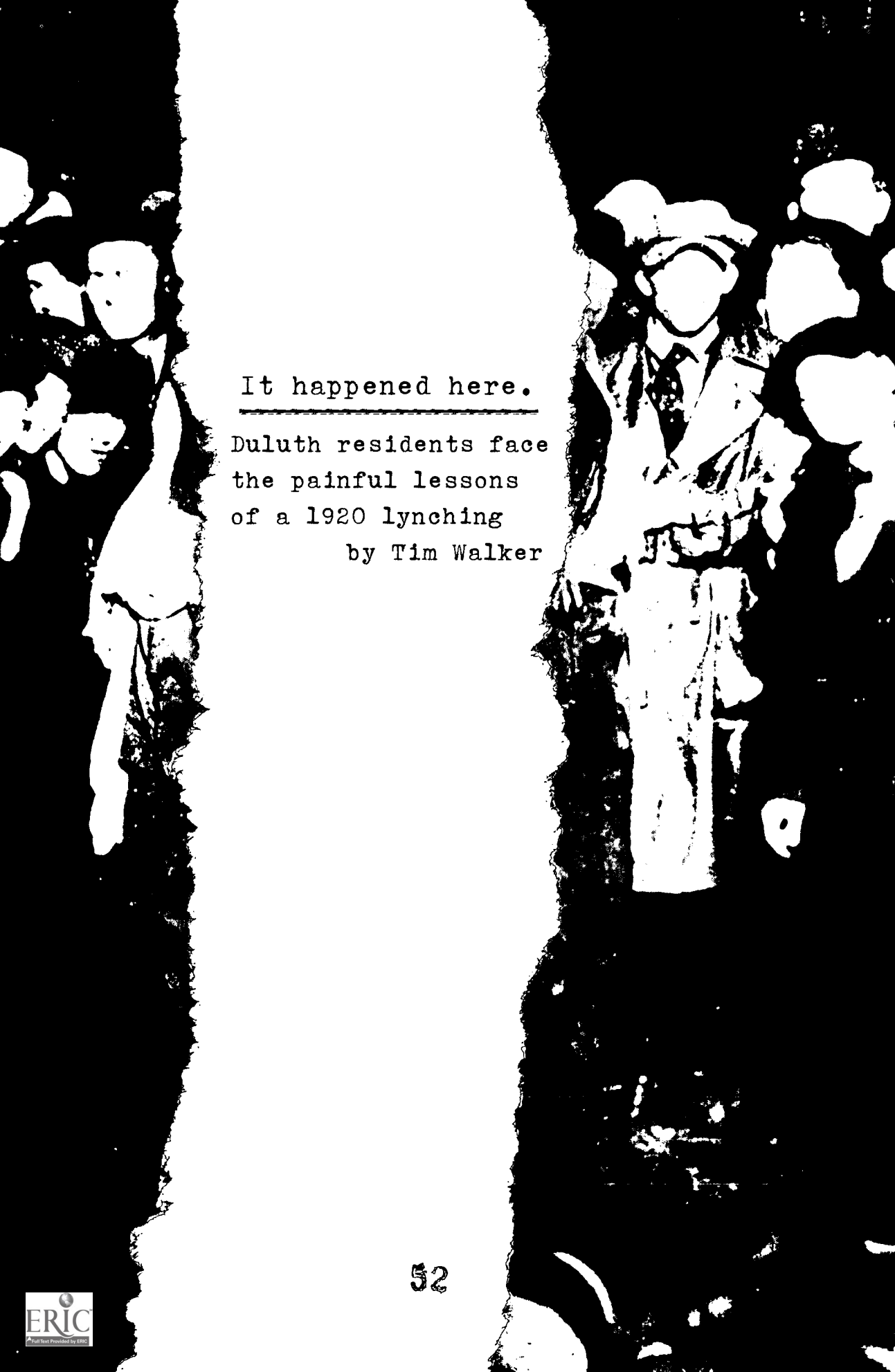
Mix It Up Dialogues allow students to talk constructively about the social boundaries that all too often create divisions, misunderstanding, conflict and dysfunction at school.

Produced by the Study Circles Resource Center, the Mix It Up Handbook, "Reaching Across Boundaries: Talk to Create Change," shows you how to organize and start Mix It Up Dialogue Groups on your campus.

When young people organize, lead and participate in face-to-face dialogues, they learn active listening, critical thinking, respect for different points of view and how to work with those who are different.

"Reaching Across Boundaries: Talk to Create Change" (Grades 7-12) is available exclusively in electronic PDF format. To obtain your free copy, log onto www.mixitup.org; click on "Start a Mix It Up Dialogue Group."

PARTICIPATE IN MIX IT UP AT LUNCH DAY ON NOV. 18, 2003



It happened here.

Duluth residents face the painful lessons of a 1920 lynching

by Tim Walker

Melissa Taylor first saw the postcard when she was in high school. She and her siblings stumbled across it in a chest of old pictures belonging to her parents. • "As a kid, I knew terrible things happened to Black people," recalls Taylor. "But this picture [on the postcard] frightened even my father. He and my mother both knew about it." ¶ For African American families in Duluth, the black-and-white photo taken in 1920 was a shocking reminder of an incident this small city had tried for decades to forget. Taylor believes the racial climate in the city her family has called home for three generations hasn't really changed.

"All the undercurrent of emotion and hate and fear that drove this community to do what it did in 1920 still exists," she says.

The final week of Spring 1920 had been one to celebrate. The northeastern Minnesota town at the western tip of Lake Superior was about to mark the 50th anniversary of its city charter. On Monday, June 14, John Robinson's Circus – "Now the Finest in the World!" its ads boasted — rolled into town. Citizens from the surrounding area converged on the West Duluth fairgrounds to enjoy the circus and accompanying parade before it headed off to Virginia, Minn., about 60 miles north of Duluth, the following morning. Two young Duluthians — Irene Tusken, a 19-year-old stenographer, and James Sullivan, an 18-year-old dockworker — met up and went to the circus that evening.

No one knows exactly why, where or when, but something transpired during Tusken's and Sullivan's visit that would lead them, later that night, to level charges of robbery and rape against six African American circus workers.

The following morning, despite the absence of any physical evidence or additional witnesses, the Duluth police stormed the circus train. Sleeping Black workers were rousted out of their beds and rounded up outside the carriages. The officers arrested six men — Elias Clayton, Nate Green, Elmer Jackson, Loney Williams, John Thomas and Isaac McGhie — and carted them to the city jail.

By nightfall on June 15, with the evening edition of the *Duluth Herald* already calling the case closed ("West Duluth Girl Victim of Six Negroes"), an angry mob estimated between 5,000 and 10,000 people overpowered the hapless police force and stormed the jail, dragging three of the accused — Clayton, Jackson and McGhie — out onto Second Avenue.

The three men pleaded for their lives as the mob pummeled them and dragged them through the street. At a lamppost at the corner of Second Avenue East and First Street, the captors stripped the men to their waists, fastened nooses around their necks one by one and hoisted them up the makeshift gallows. Those within reach continued to strike the dangling bodies.

Ushering over a photographer standing nearby, the lead assailants formed a circle around the lamppost to pose with their handiwork. As the camera flashed, some stared impassively; others grinned and slapped each other on the shoulders, stretching their necks and cocking their heads to make sure they got in the picture. Clustered around the shirtless corpses, the White men in the photograph are all wearing overcoats and hats against the chill of a late spring evening. By week's end, the picture would be printed and sold as souvenir postcards throughout the city.

Looking Back to Look Ahead

Decades later, at the intersection of Second Avenue East and First Street, White and African American citizens gather. Passersby wonder what the small group is doing, solemnly standing at the intersection on June 15. There is, after all, no plaque or marker that would indicate anything extraordinary occurred on this site — symbolic

of the community's decades of silence about the lynchings.

For years, annual gatherings at the site were quiet and lightly attended. One year, maybe 25 would show up; other years, as few as 10.

White Duluthians explain this in various ways — lack of awareness, fear of opening old wounds, a general discomfort with racial issues. Still, many acknowledge that the murders of Elias Clayton, Elmer Jackson and Isaac McGhie have haunted the community for decades. Bob Dylan, who was born in Duluth and whose father lived there at the time of the lynching, referenced the incident in the opening line of his 1965 ballad "Desolation Row": "They're selling postcards of the hanging."

It was Michael Fedo's 1979 book, *Trial by Mob*, however, that refused to let the story of June 15, 1920, fade from memory. Until it was reprinted in 2000 by the Minnesota Historical Society, under a new title, *The Lynchings in Duluth*, this detailed account of the murders was hard to find, but those who had only heard of the event in passing and wanted to know more, hunted it down.

Heidi Bakk-Hansen, a local journalist, and Catherine Ostos, a teacher at Central High School, five blocks from the vigil site, were two of them. Although the two women knew that Duluth, like most Northern cities, had had its share of covert racism over the years, they never imagined that hate violence had a public face in their town.

"We found out," says Ostos, "that it can happen in Duluth." Ostos and Bakk-Hansen soon joined the vigil at Second Avenue East and First Street on June 15.

By 2000, local activists believed that the time was long overdue for the city to commemorate the lynching and help the community confront its past. Bakk-Hansen, Ostos and nine others formed the Clayton-Jackson-McGhie Memorial Committee (named

As the camera flashed, some...grinned and slapped each other on the shoulders.

COURTESY OF THE ALLEN-LITTLEFIELD COLLECTION

after the three victims) to campaign for a memorial on the lynching site and promote remembrance and reconciliation in their city.

"I guess our hope," says Ostos, "was to give the words 'It can happen in Duluth' new meaning."

The Clayton-Jackson-McGhie Memorial Committee joined a growing national network of community organizations that are examining their legacies of racial violence. In towns from Rosewood, Fla., to Provo, Utah, activists are asking similar questions: How can events so traumatic go unacknowledged for so long? How should we present the information? Are dialogue and healing possible? What do our local residents — particularly our young people — need to know?

"It was never forgotten. People knew," says Henry Banks, who has lived in Duluth for almost 20 years and is co-chair of the Clayton-Jackson-McGhie Memorial Committee. "They just didn't want to talk about it."

For many people, Banks and other activists say, the concept of "lynching," like slavery, is safely sealed in the past.

"What happened in Duluth 80 years ago," says Catherine Ostos, "is a part of our history. But the mentality, the climate of the times, the violence people are capable of, is part of our present. Matthew Shepard was lynched. James Byrd was lynched. That's not history."

When devising strategies about how to promote racial reconciliation built on a foundation of awareness about the 1920 lynching, members of the Clayton-Jackson-McGhie Memorial Committee were careful not to simply memorialize the three men. That approach, they reasoned, would allow the town to wash its hands of such blatant brutality without addressing the institutionalized racism and economic inequities in 21st-century Duluth.

"Duluth has a long history of covert racism," says Banks. "When I walk down the street or meet people for the first time, I'm often made to feel like an African American. There's a lot of mistrust and suspicions between Whites and Blacks in Duluth. Not enough has been done to extend opportunities to the African American community. The economic inequalities in the city are extreme."

Looking back to look ahead is the whole point, says Heidi Bakk-Hansen. "Our community's ability to celebrate diversity and be a welcoming place depends on our open discussion of this episode."

Some of the goals of the committee, including a permanent memorial at the lynching site, would take years of effort and relentless fundraising. Other ideas, like adding a unit on the lynching to the high school social studies curriculum, might have prompted a tangle of red tape or even a public outcry, but the committee already had a key ally in Duluth's classrooms.

"Why Couldn't It Happen Here Again?"

Catherine Nachbar was an 8th-grader when her father told her about what happened in 1920. When she asked her

IN FOCUS

Without Sanctuary

According to the most conservative estimates, some 5,000 people — mostly African American men — were lynched in the United States between 1882 (the first year reliable statistics were gathered) and 1968 (the year in which many scholars believe the classic forms of lynching disappeared). Today, in Duluth and other communities across the nation, the very photographs that earlier generations of White citizens took and distributed as postcards as a way to affirm the oppressive message of racial violence are now helping activists and educators address the lingering impact of such incidents.

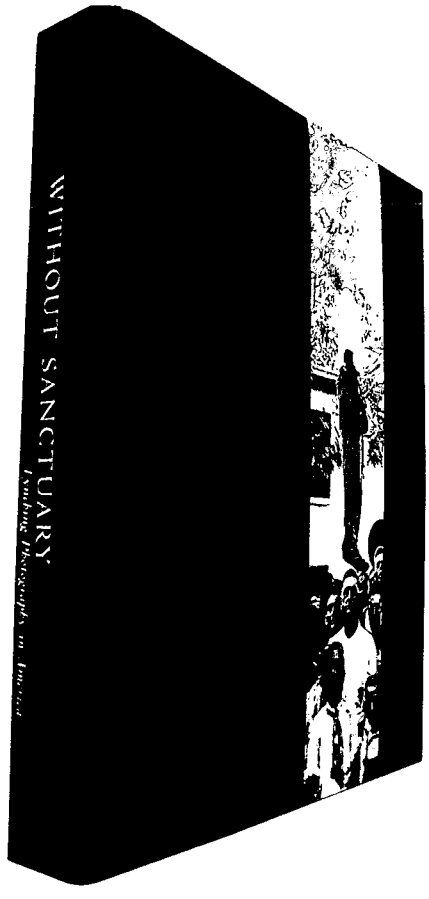
In addition to the stories carefully preserved in some families and rejected by others, newspaper accounts and other evidence of lynchings have often been available in local library archives, for those willing to do the research. The photographs, however — which in ensuing decades often disappeared from public collections and passed out of private circulation — exert a

history teacher at Central High the next day at school, he confirmed the story.

"But that's where it ended," she recalls. "It was a pretty taboo subject."

Nine years later, Nachbar stood once again in a Central High history classroom — as a teacher herself. In her first year on the job, she told her students about the Duluth lynching.

"I brought it up in class for a couple of reasons," Nachbar says. "Any discussion of contemporary racism must include an examination — an unveiling, really — of a past that included the pursuit, torture and murder of African Americans. Our own community unfortunately has a link to that past. But, most importantly, I thought it was a good way for students to address racial issues that we



Some 5,000 people – mostly African American men – were lynched in the United States between 1882 and 1968.

force that no written description can match.

Atlanta antique dealer James Allen had long recognized the documentary value of lynching photographs. In 2000, his decade-long journey of canvassing the South for copies of these rare and disturbing pictures culminated in a traveling exhibit and accompanying book, titled *Without Sanctuary* ($60).

Like the Duluth postcard, which is included in the book and exhibit, many of the photographs in *Without Sanctuary* depict brutality on two levels: the crimes themselves and the treatment of the murders as carnival spectacles.

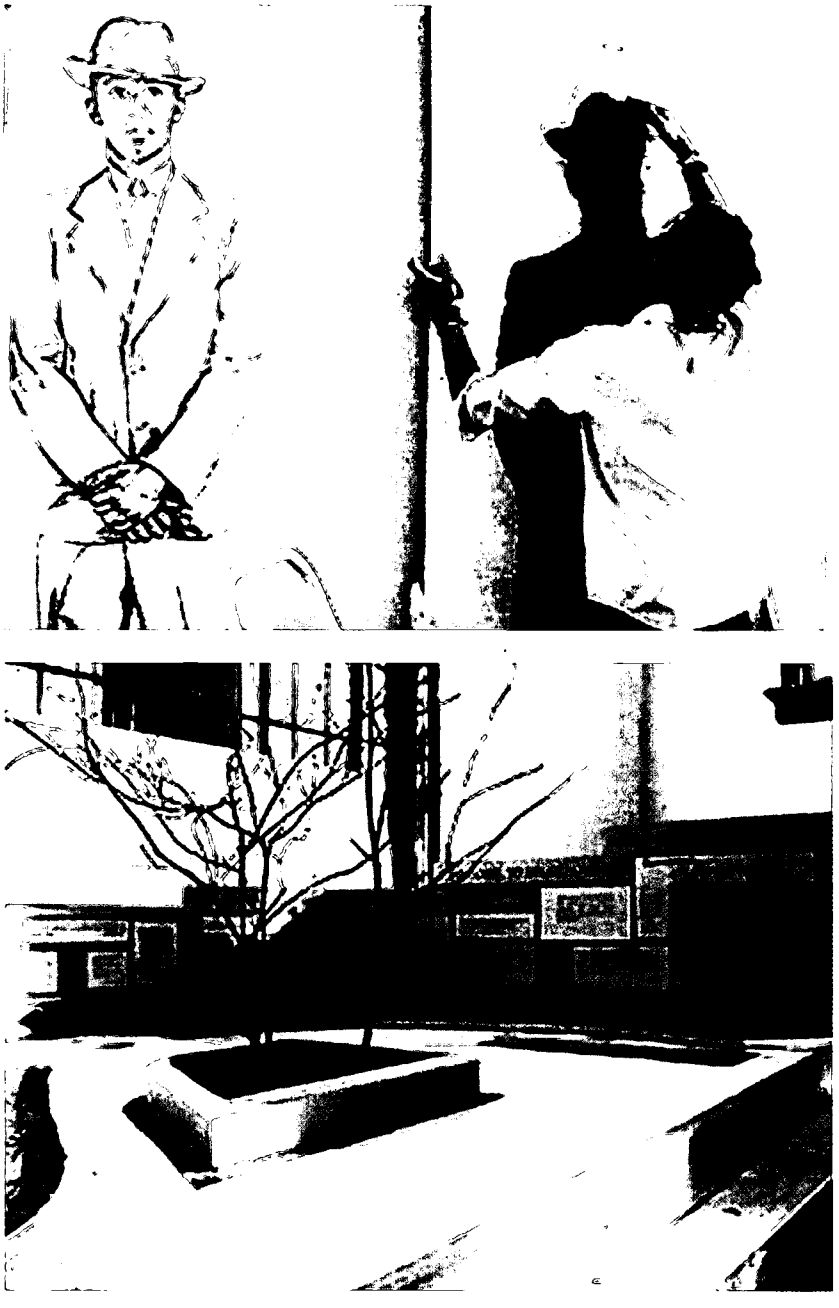
The public display of these images — to no small controversy — has opened a new phase in the acknowledgement of and dialogue about this dark episode in American history. Despite its recent and terrifying reign, the nation's legacy of lynching remains less known than either slavery or segregation.

"This is not an easy history to assimilate," historian Leon F. Litwack writes in the introduction to *Without Sanctuary*. "Obviously, it is easier to choose the path of collective amnesia, to erase such memories, to sanitize our past."

To purchase a copy of the book:

Twin Palms Publishing
TwelveTrees Press
54 1/2 East San Francisco St.
Santa Fe, NM , 87501
(800) 797-0680
www.twinpalms.com

For information on the traveling Without Sanctuary exhibit, visit www.withoutsanctuary.com



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Duluth artists and other residents are preparing for the October 2003 unveiling of the Clayton-Jackson-McGhie Memorial.

have in Duluth today."

Nachbar decided to show the students the photograph of the lynching because the postcard had played such a pivotal role over the years in reminding the community of its shameful past.

"Yes, it is a grisly picture," Nachbar explains, "but I wanted students to see not so much the victims but the mob as well, their expressions especially. [White people in] our community did this to these men. I got that point across to the class. They were shocked by the photo but understood why I showed it to them."

Only four or five in a class evenly divided between White and Black students had ever heard of the lynching. Toni Roberts was not one of them.

"My mom grew up in Duluth and she never heard about it," recalls Toni. "My friends in other schools didn't either. But Ms. Nachbar's purpose was not just to show us a gory photo. She also told us about the memorial committee and about a project that we could get involved in. This lesson became something kids in the class could help create and bring to the whole community."

For Nachbar's students, highly publicized hate murders in their own lifetimes have brought a special urgency to their investigation of the past.

"Maybe the deaths of Matthew Shepard and James Byrd could have been prevented," Toni says. "Something horrible happened here 80 years ago. If lynching has never really gone away, why couldn't it happen here again?"

Toni and five classmates volunteered to help write a curriculum that would use knowledge about the 1920 lynching as a springboard to promote communitywide discussions about racial reconciliation. From February 2001 through

April 2002, the students spent valuable free time researching primary documents at libraries, retrieving copies of court documents from the city archives and other government offices, tracking down photographs and meeting with members of the community who could help. Sometimes they would come to school early, just so they could squeeze in a meeting before classes started.

Recent Central High graduate Delon Grant was part of the original team. "The project allowed me to connect more with Duluth as a community," he says. "The city never really identified with things like racism and prejudice, when these are things that exist here. It made our community more realistic, and brought us out of our little bubble and helped us realize that we've made mistakes."

Reconciliation and Healing Take Time

In October 2001, Catherine Ostos and Portia Johnson, another member of the Clayton-Jackson- McGhie Memorial Committee, traveled to Atlanta to attend a special workshop on racial reconciliation sponsored by Emory University and the Moore's Ford Memorial Committee (honoring two African American couples lynched in 1946 at the Moore's Ford Bridge near Monroe, Ga.)

Joining the representatives from Duluth and Monroe were grassroots organizers from Chattanooga, Tenn.; Ocoee and Rosewood, Fla.; Orangeburg, S.C.; Wilmington, N.C.; Tulsa, Okla.; and Price, Utah. For three days, the participants shared their community stories, compared group histories and strategies, and discussed ways to begin or complete the healing process.

Although relishing the commonalities with the other groups, Ostos also realized that her colleagues in Duluth were fortunate not to have to face the danger some of their new friends had endured while organizing memorials at lynching sites. She heard from members of the Moore's Ford Memorial Committee and Ocoee and Rosewood about intimidation and threats of violence.

"In Duluth, thankfully, we haven't experienced any of that," says Ostos. "I realized that my bickering about the slow wheels of the local bureaucracy seems trivial. I mean, we have a mayor who is sincerely trying to help us out, and the community overall seems ready to talk about it."

"What these communities share is a clear and expressed commitment to truth," explains Dr. Joseph Jordan, director of the Sonja Haynes Stone Cultural Center at the University of North Carolina. "That commitment is buttressed by a commitment to justice and reconciliation. On the other hand, if you're interested in revenge, if you're interested in confrontation, if you're interested in retribution, then the community will lose its way."

Community activist Henry Banks concurs. "Duluth is only in the first phase of this campaign," he says. "I've been here for 18 years. Many of us have waited a long time. We can wait some more. Reconciliation, atonement and healing — to be truly lasting — have to take their time."

Some of the waiting, though, will soon be over. At press time, Banks and other Committee supporters were eagerly awaiting the unveiling of the Clayton-Jackson-McGhie Memorial in Duluth — scheduled for Friday, Oct. 10, 2003. The scenic plaza will feature three seven-foot-high bronze sculptures depicting the three men and 16 quotes from renowned philosophers.

Back in Duluth's classroom, the work of the Committee and Catherine Nachbar's students has already begun to leave its mark.

"We want to assemble a student board to make presentations to other teachers in the Duluth district," Toni Roberts says. "Our input can really make other students sit up and pay attention. I feel honored to be a part of this process—the process of educating while healing." •

Tim Walker is a writer based in Washington, D.C.

WEB EXCLUSIVE

Want your students to learn about the history of racial violence in America — and explore their own responses to racism? Interested in improving their reading, writing, computer and research skills?

Visit our online magazine to access Minnesota teacher Steve Halvorson's classroom activity about the 1920 lynchings in Duluth (Grades 9-12).

Find the activity at www.teachingtolerance.org/magazine; click on "It happened here."

OVER ONE MILLION BIAS INCIDENTS OCCUR ON

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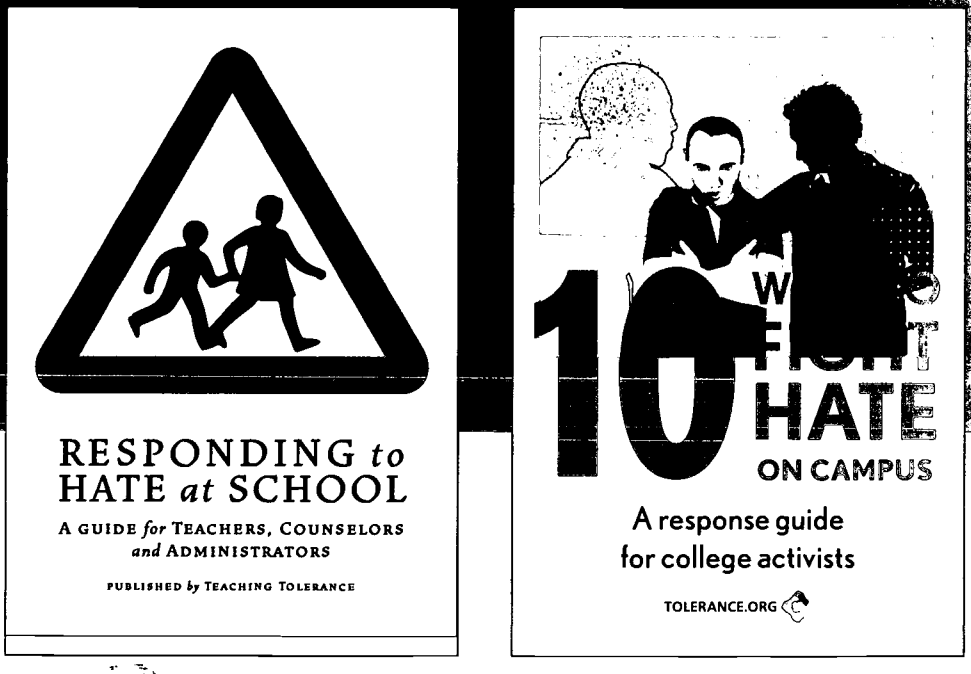
TO OBTAIN FREE COPIES of these publications, send your written request to:

Teaching Tolerance & Tolerance.org
ATTN: Order Department
400 Washington Avenue • Montgomery, AL 36104

Or. SUBMIT YOUR ORDER ONLINE. Log onto www.tolerance.org; click on "Order Our Materials"

CHOOL AND COLLEGE CAMPUSES EACH YEAR.

W TO RESPOND?



Teaching Tools

Reviewed by Janet Schmidt
Please contact sources listed for complete information before ordering.

Courageous Kids

The simply written book *Courage* ($12) offers both humorous and serious examples of bravery in the everyday lives of children, including "being the first to make up after an argument" and "going to bed without a night-light." Teachers can use the book to start a discussion of other examples of courage that are part of children's lived experiences as well as those that are more remote. (Grades preK-3)

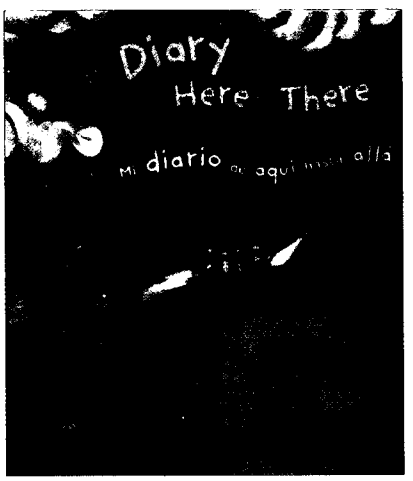
Houghton-Mifflin Children's Books
(800) 225-3362
www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com

Set in South Carolina in the 1920s, *Darby* ($15.99) is partly derived from oral history interviews conducted by the author between 1997 and 2000. Assisted by her friend Evette, 9-year-old Darby writes a funny story about toads for the local newspaper. Next, Darby and Evette submit a much more controversial piece, which raises questions about racism. When the story is published, it leads to turmoil and transformation throughout the community. (Grades 5-8)

Candlewick Press
(617) 661-3330
www.candlewick.com

Immigrant Experiences

The author's experiences immigrating to the U.S. from Mexico with her family are the basis for the bilingual story *My Diary from Here to There/Mi Diario de Aquí Hasta Allá* ($16.95). Through entries in Amada's diary, the reader learns about the numerous steps involved in such a journey, the emotional challenges of leaving friends and relatives behind, and the excitement of new experiences. A free curriculum and teachers' guide are available. (Grades 2-5)



Children's Book Press
(415) 821-3080
www.childrensbookpress.org

In *The Color of Home* ($15.99), Hassan, a 1st grader who has just arrived in the United States, struggles with recent memories of the violence that caused his family to flee Somalia. With the help of an interpreter and his new teacher, he paints pictures of home and shares them with his classmates and family, helping him to adjust to his new surroundings. (Grades K-3)

Phyllis Fogelman Books
Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers
(800) 788-6262
www.penguinputnam.com

Sparks Fly Upward ($15) is based loosely on the author's family, Jewish immigrants to Canada in the early 20th century. The main character, Rebecca, learns to negotiate the prejudices of her own family and the people she meets. The reader is drawn into Rebecca's emotional life, and she demonstrates the qualities of courage, peacemaking and compassion. (Grades 5-9)

Clarion Books
A Houghton-Mifflin Company imprint
(800) 225-3362
www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com

Families and Friends

Monkey for Sale ($17) is a story from the Democratic Republic of Congo about two girls who go to the market and end up saving a monkey from becoming a pet. In between, they kick off a chain of barter that leads back to the monkey. Students can learn about the process of bartering while they practice sequencing skills. (Grades 1-4)

Farrar, Strauss and Giroux
(888) 330-8477
www.fsgkidsbooks.com

Megan, who is deaf, is happy to meet her new neighbor Cynthia, who can hear. *Deaf Child Crossing* ($15.95) follows the quick development of their friendship, as they negotiate nuances of abilities and differences. As Cynthia learns sign language, she sometimes tries too hard to help Megan communicate with others, but Megan learns that there are times when she can accept help from her friends. Deaf actress and first-time author Marlee Matlin presents a fictional story drawn partly from her own experiences. (Grades 4-6)

Kaplan Publishing
(800) 223-2336
www.simonsayskids.com

In *Singing with Momma Lou* ($16.95), 9-year-old Tamika and her family make weekly trips to the nursing home to visit her grandmother, who has Alzheimer's disease and doesn't always recognize familiar people. After Tamika's father shows her scrapbooks full of photos and clippings about Momma Lou's activities in the Civil Rights Movement, Tamika uses some of these to jog her grandmother's memory, with happy results. (Grades 1-5)

Lee & Low Books
(888) 320-3190
www.leeandlow.com

Although GLBT (Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender) may be awkward to say, viewers of *Just Call Me Kade* ($50 for K-12, $200 for colleges, $75 rental) will better understand the experience of a young transgender person. Kade and his family share their doubts and discomforts with social, emotional and physical challenges, but the 26-minute film presents a realistically upbeat story. (Grades 10 and above)

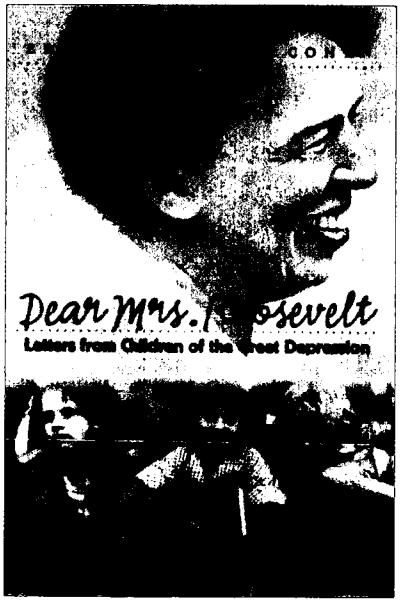
Frameline
(415) 703-8650
www.frameline.org

Discussion of family diversity is incomplete without consideration of gay and lesbian parents. *Daddy & Papa: A Story about Gay Fathers in America* ($95 for K-12, $275 for colleges, $75 rental) covers many of the issues unique to this particular family structure. Strong language may limit the use of this 57-minute film in high school classrooms, but college classes and community groups can use it to prompt complex discussions about parenting and family diversity that transcend the topic of gay fatherhood. (Grades 11 and above)

New Day Films
(888) 367-9154
www.newday.com

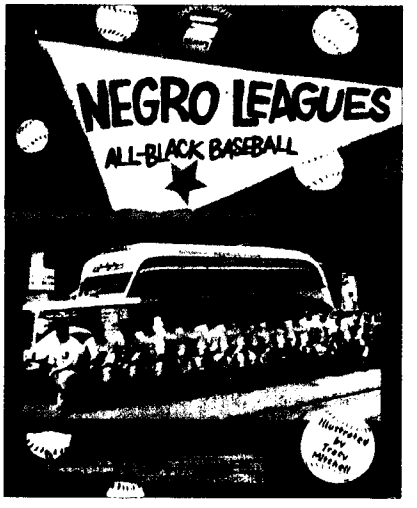
Historical Perspectives

The voices of children and youth who experienced terrible economic hardships are presented in *Dear Mrs. Roosevelt: Letters from Children of the Great Depression* ($16.95). Two hundred selected letters received by First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt between 1933 and 1941 illustrate the impact of the Depression on young peoples' lives. (Grades 3-12)



The University of North Carolina Press
(800) 848-6224
www.uncpress.unc.edu

A young girl tells the story of the *Negro Leagues: All Black Baseball* ($14.89) from a contemporary point of view. After she visits the National Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, N.Y., she learns about the days when baseball was segregated, how the Negro Leagues came to exist, and why they eventually disbanded. (Grades 1-4)

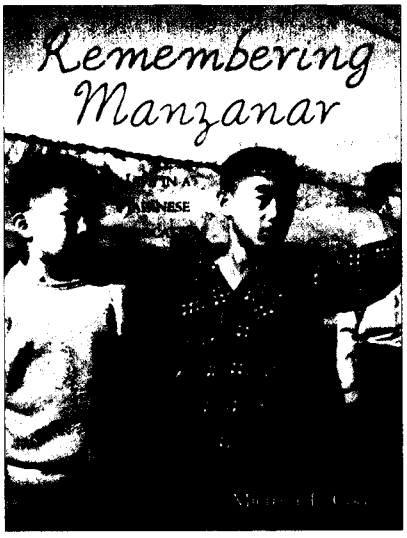


Grosset & Dunlop
An imprint of Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers
(800) 526-0275
www.penguinputnam.com

Originally published privately by the author in 1897, *Thirty Years a Slave: From Bondage to Freedom* ($15.95) brings the autobiography of Louis Hughes to a wider audience. Hughes was born a slave in Virginia and was sold away to a Mississippi plantation at age 12. After multiple attempts, he escaped and eventually settled with his wife in Milwaukee.

His story will enhance the study of 19th-century U.S. history and literature. (Grades 9 and above)

NewSouth Books
(334) 834-3556
www.newsouthbooks.com



Remembering Manzanar: Life in a Japanese Relocation Camp ($16) combines photographs with entries from diaries, journals, memoirs and news accounts of the Japanese immigrants and Japanese Americans who were held at the relocation camp in the eastern California desert during World War II. The author also describes the annual Manzanar pilgrimage, which began in 1969, and offers a current perspective on the events that took place 60 years ago. (Grades 9 and above)

Clarion Books
A Houghton-Mifflin Company imprint
(800) 225-3362
www.houghtonmifflinbooks.com

After enduring life in a Jewish ghetto in her native Lithuania, Judy Meisel and her sister went on to survive the horrors of Stutthof, a concentration camp in Poland. The teenaged sisters eventually found refuge in Denmark, where a woman named Paula cared for them, prompting the title of the 60-minute video that tells their story, *Tak for Alt* ("Thanks for Everything"; $49.95). Meisel eventually immigrated to the U.S. where, in the '60s, she became active in the Civil Rights Movement. A curriculum guide is also available ($10). (Grades 11 and above)

Sirena Films
(310) 826-8112 - phone
(310) 826-7433 - fax

The 2000 Justice for Janitors Campaign victory is portrayed in *Sí, Se Puede! Yes We Can! Janitor Strike in L.A.* ($15.95), a bilingual Spanish and English story told from the point of view of a fictional boy Carlitos, whose mother helped to lead the strike. There are few elementary-level stories on the topic of workers struggling for their economic rights. This book will add an important dimension to classroom learning. (Grades 4-6)

Cinco Puntos Press
(800) 566-9072
www.cincopuntos.com

In March 2000, Fumiko Ishioka, curator of a Holocaust education center in Tokyo, received a suitcase with these words inscribed in white paint: "Hana Brady, May 16, 1931, *Waisenkind*" ("orphan" in German). Prompted by the young Japanese students who saw the suitcase on display at the museum, Ishioka uncovered the story of *Hana's Suitcase* ($24.95 for book and CD), its owner and her family. (Grades 4-6)

Albert Whitman & Company
(800) 255-7675
www.albertwhitman.com

Educators who are looking for a current and comprehensive guide for Holocaust studies should obtain a copy of *The Oryx Holocaust Sourcebook* ($55.95). Written by an expert high school educator on the subject, its 17 chapters guide teachers to general print resources, primary sources, electronic and audiovisual materials, and relevant organizations. Annotated entries make the book especially useful. (Grades 9-12)

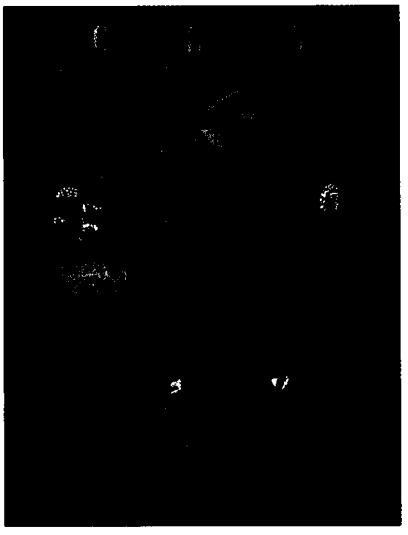
Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc.
(800) 225-5800
www.greenwood.com

Operation Pedro Pan was the name given to the mission that brought 14,000 Cuban children to the U.S. in 1961 to provide them with opportunities believed to be lacking in Castro's Cuba. The story of one of these Cuban children, Elena Maza, comes to life in *Embracing America: A Cuban Exile Comes of Age* ($24.95). (Grades 11 and above)

University Press of Florida
(800) 226-3822
www.upf.com

Illustrations by folk artist Malcah Zeldis vividly complement the text by her daughter, Yona Zeldis McDonough, in *Peaceful Protest: The Life of Nelson Mandela* ($17.85). The author helps young readers understand the details of Mandela's life and work, including his evolution as an activist, time in prison and subsequent position as South Africa's first elected Black leader. (Grades 1-5)

Walker Publishing Company
(800) 289-2553
www.walkerbooks.com



Cultural Explorations

San Antonio singer-songwriter Tish Hinojosa's 1996 recording of *Cada Niño/Every Child* ($16.95) now has a companion songbook ($18.95). Both Spanish and English lyrics fit the music of each bilingual song. Young children and their teachers can learn both sets of lyrics in order to experi-

ence a bit of the Mexican American border culture through varied musical styles. The Rounder Kids CD 8032 is also available separately through www.rounder.com. (Grades preK-5)

Cinco Puntos Press
(800) 566-9072
www.cincopuntos.com

Enter the Dragon: Production Guidelines and Scripts for Three Chinese Plays Adapted from Chinese Folktales ($20) developed from a children's theater summer camp in Vermont. In creating the scripts and songs, the authors took some liberties with the original folktales. Educators can use their own judgment to amend or revise the plays as needed. School and community groups can use the text and music, along with suggestions for creating props, costumes and sets, to produce plays with groups of 15-30 children. (Grades 2 and above)

Main Street Arts Press
(802) 869-2960
www.mainstreetarts.org

Meet Naiche: A Native Boy from the Chesapeake Bay Area ($15.95) is the first book in a series, *My World: Young Native Americans Today*. Naiche is a boy of Piscataway and Apache descent who lives in a rural area near the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. Beautiful photos and solid information presented in a narrative style combine to present a rich resource about past and present events, traditions and daily life. (Grades 4-6)

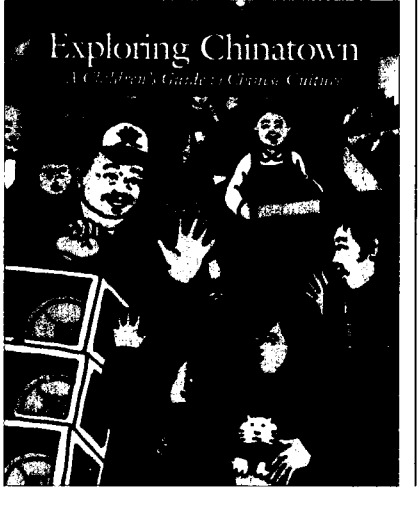
Beyond Words Publishing
(503) 531-8700
www.beyondword.com

In *From Wall to Wall* ($14.99), beautiful photography and simple text combine to present the theme of "walls" both literally and figuratively. The photos, taken in locations across the U.S. and in other countries, portray art and architecture from many cultures and times in history. In addition to exploring the stories behind some of the particular walls, students can discuss the multiple meanings of walls in human experience. (Grades 1-4)

Penguin Putnam Books for Young Readers
(800) 526-0275
www.penguinputnam.com

The authors of *Exploring Chinatown: A Children's Guide to Chinese Culture* ($22.95) combine text, photos and drawings to offer a snapshot of Chinese history, medicine, religion, customs, art and music through the window of San Francisco's Chinatown. Also included are recipes for many familiar Chinese foods and instructions for playing Chinese chess. Teachers can build an in-depth study of Chinese culture on the information offered in this book. (Grades 4 and above)

Pacific View Press
(415) 285-8538
www.pacificviewpress.com



The 50-minute video *What Do You Believe?* ($99 for high schools, $69 rental) and accompanying study guide (available for free at www.whatdoyoubelieve.org) promote teaching about religion and spirituality, taking care to distinguish that from "teaching religion." The documentary includes first person accounts by teens of diverse religious and spiritual orientations – Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Buddhist, Pagan, Native American and Catholic. Teachers can use the film alone, but the study guide provides a "ground rules" activity that should precede viewing. (Grades 11 and above)

New Day Films
(888) 367-9154
www.newday.com

The Pot That Juan Built ($16.95) is the true story of contemporary Mexican potter Juan Quezada and the transformation of the village of Mata Ortiz into an arts community. Readers will learn about the traditional methods Quezada uses to create beautiful pots. Younger students will enjoy the narrative written in the style of "The House that Jack Built," while older students will appreciate the details provided on each facing page. (Grades 1-8)

Lee & Low Books
(888) 320-3190
www.leeandlow.com

Everyday Life in South Asia ($21.95) is a collection of essays from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. By focusing on everyday life, the editors believe that students and scholars

alike will gain insight into the social and cultural worlds of the writers. The book is divided into six parts: The Family and the Life Course, Genders, Social Distinctions of Caste and Class, Practicing Religion, Nation-Making and Globalization, Public Culture and the South Asian Diaspora. (College)

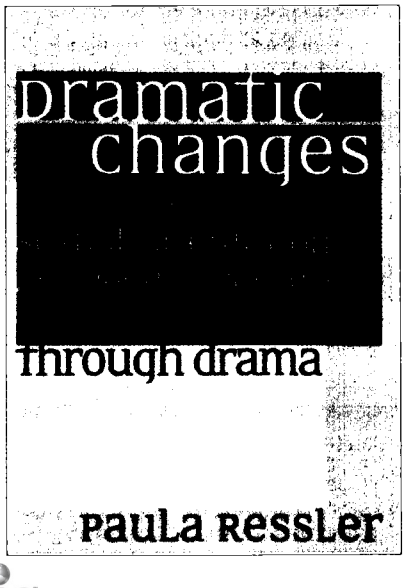
Indiana University Press
(800) 842-6796
http://iupress.indiana.edu

Professional Development

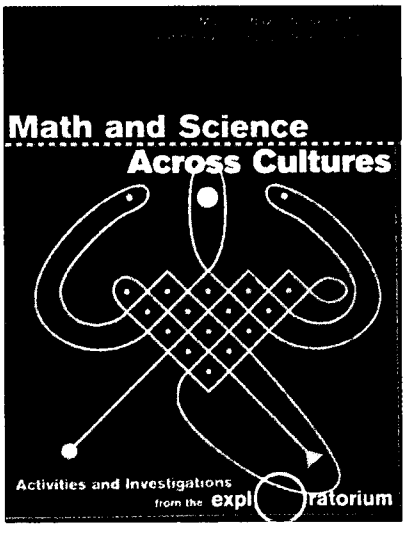
The authors of *Lessons from Turtle Island: Native Curriculum in Early Childhood Classrooms* ($29.95) make a strong case for careful approaches to teaching about Native Americans, offering both recommendations and critiques of teacher resource books and children's literature. For example, the authors criticize the practice of making replicas of sacred objects, comparing such activities to the unlikely choice of making rosaries or yarmulkes as a craft project in a public school. This is an excellent resource for educators willing to challenge their own ingrained habits and assumptions. (Grades preK-3)

Redleaf Press
(800) 423-8309
www.redleafpress.org

High school teachers can use *Dramatic Changes: Talking About Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity with High School Students Through Drama* ($21) to incorporate role plays, scripted dramas, multifaceted and extended dramas and socially critical drama approaches into both classroom and extracurricular activities. (Grades 9-12)



Greenwood Heinemann
(800) 225-5800
www.heinemann.com



Math and science teachers often have more difficulty integrating multicultural content into their subject areas than their colleagues who teach social studies and language arts. With the publication of the excellent *Math and Science Across Cultures: Activities and Investigations from the Exploratorium* ($19.95), authentic cultural exploration through math and science can flourish. Using four major themes (Patterns and Play, Counting and Calendars, Social and Cultural Traditions, Subsistence and Survival) the authors include activities from ancient Incan, Mayan and Egyptian cultures, southwestern Africa, China and Brazil. (Grades 4-12)

The New Press
(800) 223-4830
www.thenewpress.com

Using autobiographies written about childhood and young adult experiences, *Writers of the American West: Multicultural Learning Encounters* ($32) provides fascinating resource material for teachers of language arts, social studies and science. The book is organized chronologically and into four themes: Storytellers, Pioneering Young People, Young Naturalists, and Writers of the New West. (Grades 4-8)

Teacher Ideas Press
Libraries Unlimited/Heinemann Publishing
(800) 541-2086
www.heinemann.com

Encourage Activism

In *Learning to Teach for Social Justice* ($21.95), a collection of essays by student teachers, the writers respond to four essential questions: What is diversity? Does who we are influence how we teach? Who are our students and what do they need? What is the problem and what can we do about it? Teacher educators committed to integrating social justice issues into their classes and programs of study will especially appreciate this book. (College, Professional Development)

Teachers College Press
(800) 575-6566
www.teacherscollegepress.com

Racism in the Classroom: Case Studies ($22, $14.40 for ACEI members) challenges educators to move beyond multicultural education to grapple with the difficult issue of racism. The 20 case studies are divided into four sections, according to setting: younger elementary, older elementary, high school and teacher education. The frank responses that accompany each case, written by practicing teachers, students and professors in teacher education programs, will provoke more questions, reflection and discussion. (College, Professional Development)

Association for Childhood Education International
(800) 423-3563
www.acei.org

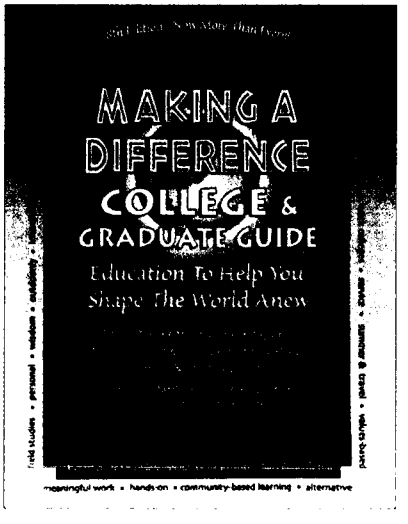
As the affirmative action debate continues on university campuses and in the judicial system, educators and policymakers should consider the ideas presented in *Embracing Race: Why We Need*

Race-Conscious Education Policy ($24.95). The author explores the interaction between race, education, opportunities and social justice as she makes a case for race-conscious policies in education. (College, Professional Development)

Teachers College Press
(800) 575-6566
www.teacherscollegepress.com

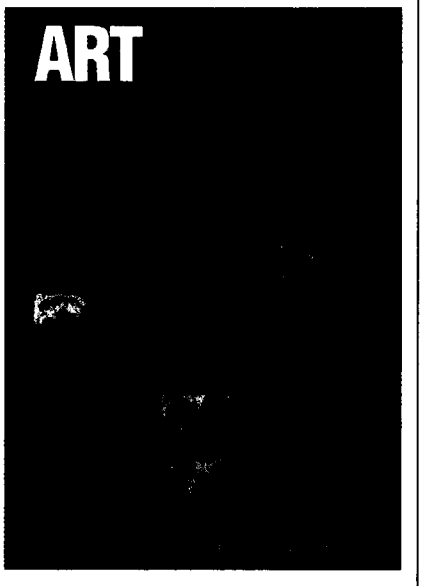
The eighth edition of *Making a Difference College and Graduate Guide: Education To Help You Shape the World Anew* ($18) provides information about undergraduate and graduate institutions that offer one or more of the following: programs that focus on social responsibility, local and global community service, peace, human rights or outdoor activities; alternative approaches to learning, including designing your own major and students helping to run the school; and colleges committed to sustainable environmental practices. Information on graduate programs may entice educators to return to schooll (Grades 11 and above)

Sageworks Press
(800) 218-4242
www.making-a-difference.com



Read *Some of Us Did Not Die: New and Selected Essays of June Jordan* ($26) to expand your thinking and challenge injustice, inspired by the provocative writing of poet and activist June Jordan, who died on June 14, 2002. (College, Professional Development)

Westview Press
(800) 386-5656
www.westviewpress.com



Art on the Line: Essays by Artists about the Point Where Their Art & Activism Intersect ($18.95) is a collection of both essays by and interviews with artists in North and South America, Africa, Asia and Europe. Selected pieces can spark discussion of activism and the arts or supplement the study of a particular region of the world. (College, Professional Development)

Curbstone Press
Consortium Book Sales
(800) 283-3572
www.curbstone.org

Build Community

Preschool teachers often find it necessary to adapt ideas designed for K-2 students to fit their younger students. *Class Meetings: Young Children Solving Problems Together* ($11), written by two classroom teachers, offers a developmentally appropriate resource for building community and mutual respect among children. (Pre K)

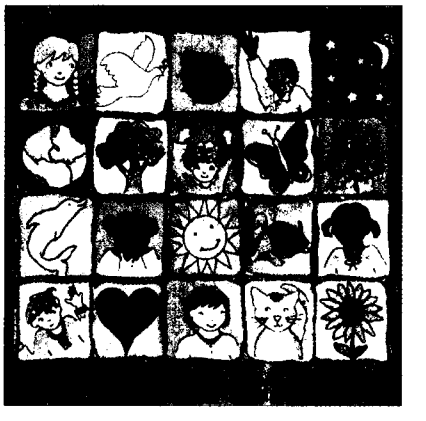
National Association for the Education of Young Children
(866) 623-9248
www.naeyc.org

Through its workshops and practical resource guides, the Northeast Foundation for Children helps K-8 teachers create peaceful and respectful learning environments. The latest addition to the *Strategies for Teachers Series* is *Rules in School* ($19.95), a thoughtful guide for involving students in classroom management. (Grades K-8)

Northeast Foundation for Children
(800) 360-6332, ext. 155
www.responsiveclassroom.org

With an emphasis on the natural world, Sarah Pirtle's recording of *Heart of the World* ($14.95 for CD, $9.95 for cassette) offers beautiful tunes and child-friendly lyrics that music teachers and classroom teachers can share with their students. Songs with topics such as the water cycle, DNA, recycling and quarks will enhance science lessons. (Grades 1-5)

A Gentle Wind
(888) 386-7664
www.gentlewind.com



First broadcast on PBS in October 2002, *Everyday Heroes: A New Documentary Film on Youth, Race and Community Service* ($69 for high schools and community groups, $225 for colleges) portrays a year in the life of a team of Americorps volunteers in the San Francisco Bay Area as they pursue youth projects and grow together as a team. The 59-minute film includes footage of group discussions, of Corps members' interactions with students, as well as individual interviews with members and mentors. (Grades 11 and above)

New Day Films
(888) 367-9154
www.every-day-heroes.org

Story Corner

The Story of SUZIE KING TAYLOR

Like other African Americans in the mid-1800s, Suzie King Taylor's grandmother, Dolly Reed, risked jail and beatings to have her loved ones educated at a secret school run by a free Black woman.

The paper crinkles as Grandma wraps the package to conceal its contents. She gives the precious parcel to Suzie and her younger brother, then shoos them out the door.

Clippety-clop, clippety-clop. The streets of Savannah, Georgia, are crowded with horse-drawn carriages. Suzie longs to look at the horses and their shiny manes, but she doesn't dare. Grandma has taught her never to stare at White people or their property. On the sidewalk a White man brushes past her. She jumps down into the street to get out of his way.

At the corner of Hambersham and Price Streets, Suzie and her brother stop. They peer about to be sure that no White people can see them. Suzie's eyes signal her brother. Go, *go!* Grandma has warned them never to enter Mrs. Woodhouse's together.

Suzie watches her brother walk down the street. Through the gate. Into the yard. Into the kitchen. She looks around again. No one is watching. She hurries down the street. Mrs. Woodhouse's kitchen is warm and welcoming. Suzie takes her place on the floor, joining thirty other Black children. The paper crinkles as she unwraps the package. Out come two books. One for Suzie, one for her brother. They place their books on their laps and look up, anxious for Mrs. Woodhouse to begin the reading lesson.

Suzie King Taylor used the skills she learned at Mrs. Woodhouse's secret school to help others. She forged passes for her grandmother so she could travel freely around Savannah. During the Civil War she taught other newly liberated slaves to read and write.

One World

We are bound together in our desire to see the world become a place in which our children can grow free and strong.

– JAMES TAYLOR, "SHED A LITTLE LIGHT"

Untitled, *by Roy, age 15, Cavite, Philippines.*
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—*R. Cooper, South Carolina*

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—*V. Vaughn, Kansas*

Powerful, informative and poignant.
—*T. Sturgill, Kentucky*

L. Sims, a New Jersey teacher

Mighty Times

View the Mighty Times movie trailer online at www.teachingtolerance.org

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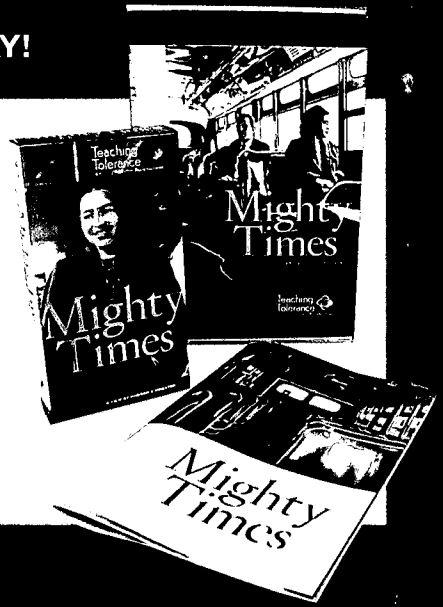

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